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CIRCUIT-BREAKER™



KEVIN MCCARTHY • KYLE BAKER

image® PRESENTS

CIRCUIT-BREAKER™

WRITER • KEVIN MCCARTHY

ARTIST • KYLE BAKER

**SPECIAL THANKS TO
MINDY STEFFEN FOR
COLORING & LETTERING ASSISTS**



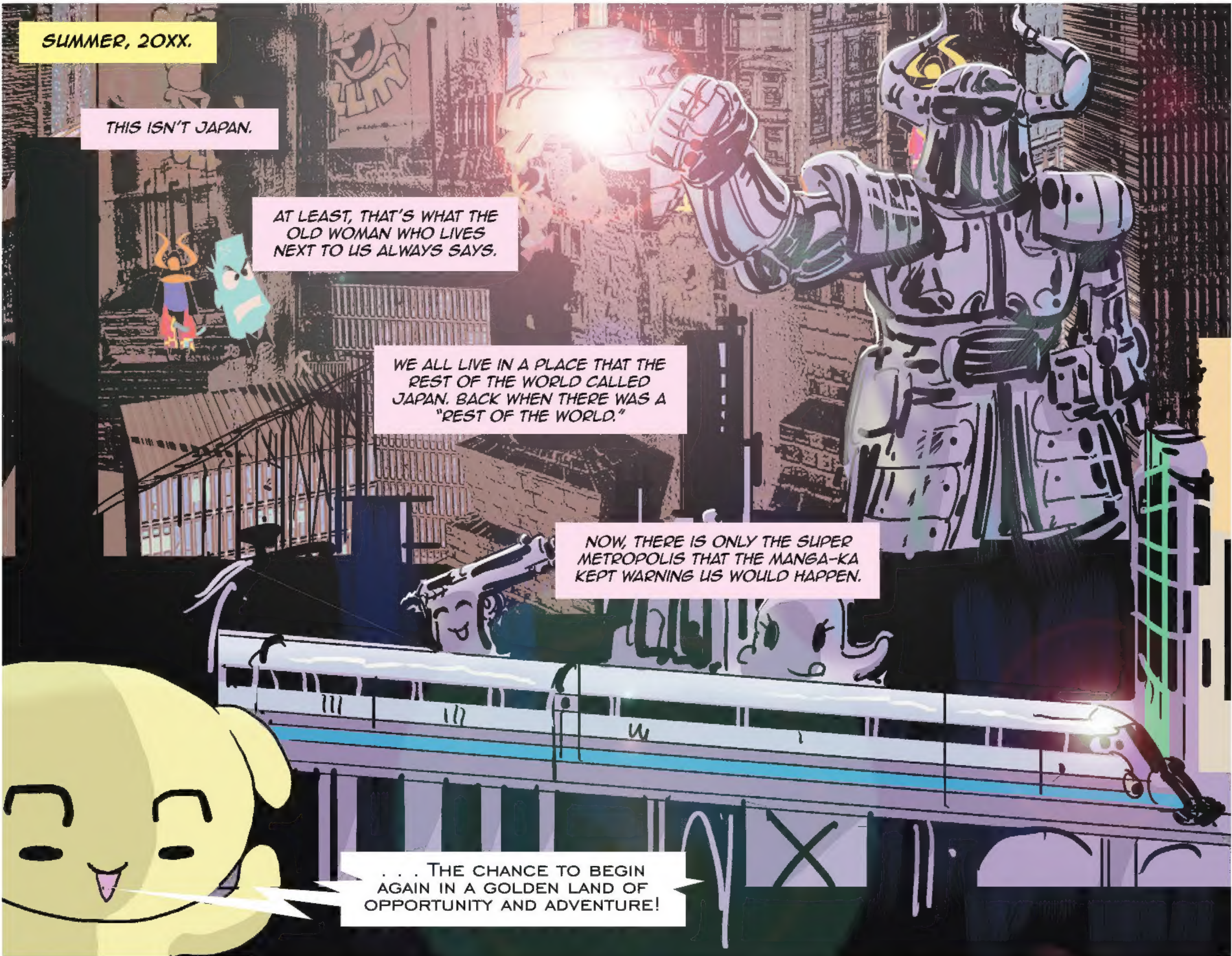
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SUMMER, 20XX.

THIS ISN'T JAPAN.

AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVES NEXT TO US ALWAYS SAYS.

WE ALL LIVE IN A PLACE THAT THE REST OF THE WORLD CALLED JAPAN. BACK WHEN THERE WAS A "REST OF THE WORLD."

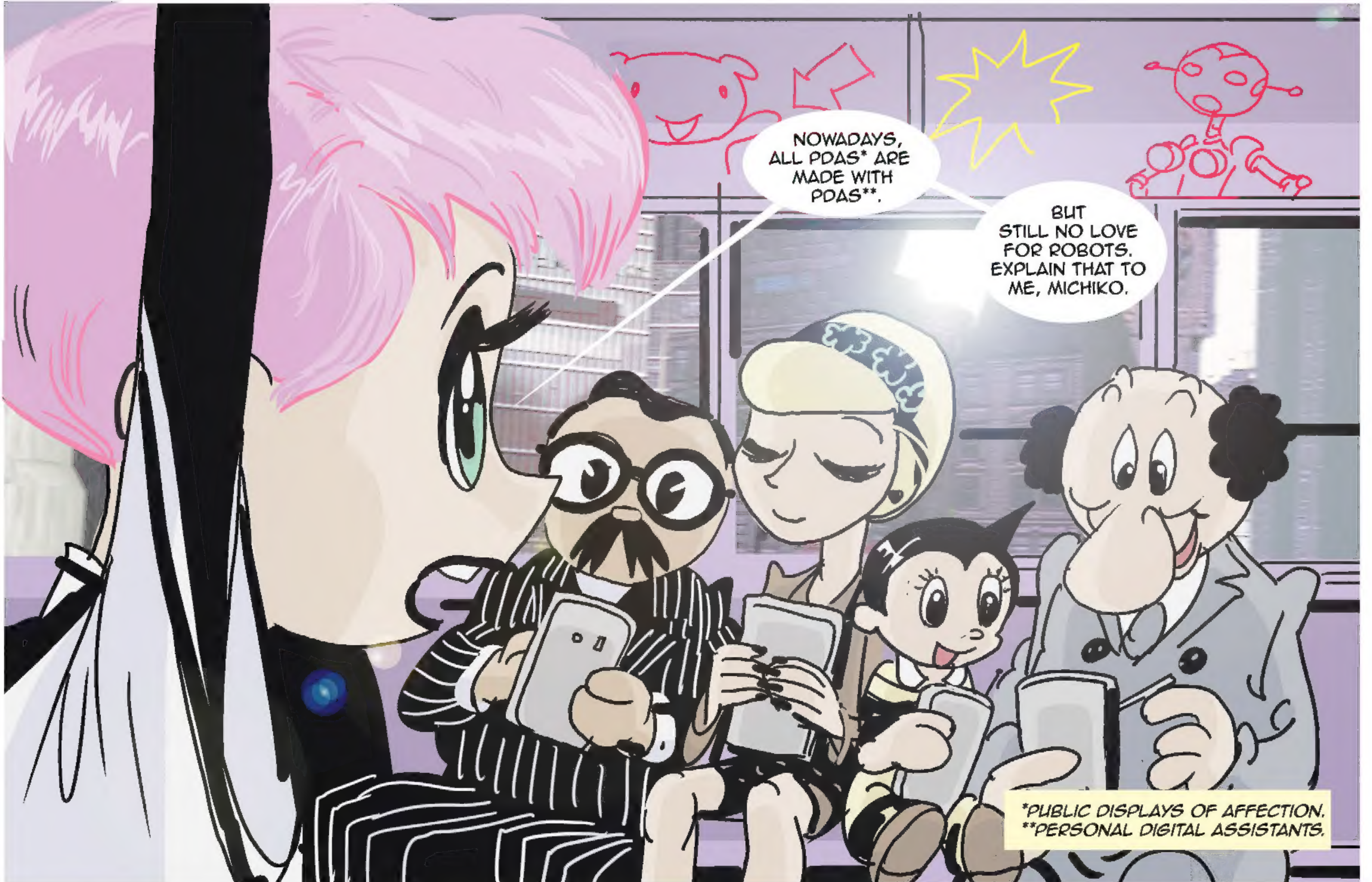
NOW, THERE IS ONLY THE SUPER METROPOLIS THAT THE MANGA-KA KEPT WARNING US WOULD HAPPEN.

... THE CHANCE TO BEGIN AGAIN IN A GOLDEN LAND OF OPPORTUNITY AND ADVENTURE!



AN INTERNATIONAL PLACE. A REFUGE FOR EVERYONE WHO SURVIVED THE WARS. A CITY OF THE FUTURE BUILT BY ROBOTS.

A CITY WHERE EVERYONE IS WELCOMED. EVERYONE ... EXCEPT ROBOTS.



NOWADAYS,
ALL PDAS* ARE
MADE WITH
PDAS**.

BUT
STILL NO LOVE
FOR ROBOTS.
EXPLAIN THAT TO
ME, MICHIKO.

*PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION.
**PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANTS.



UM, BECAUSE
ROBOTS
SUCK, CHIREN?
EVERYBODY
KNOWS THAT.

MY AI-PHONE
LETS ME DO AMAZING THINGS
FOR MYSELF. DUMB OL'
ROBOTS JUST WANT TO, LIKE,
DO EVERYTHING FOR YOU.
WHAT FUN IS THAT?



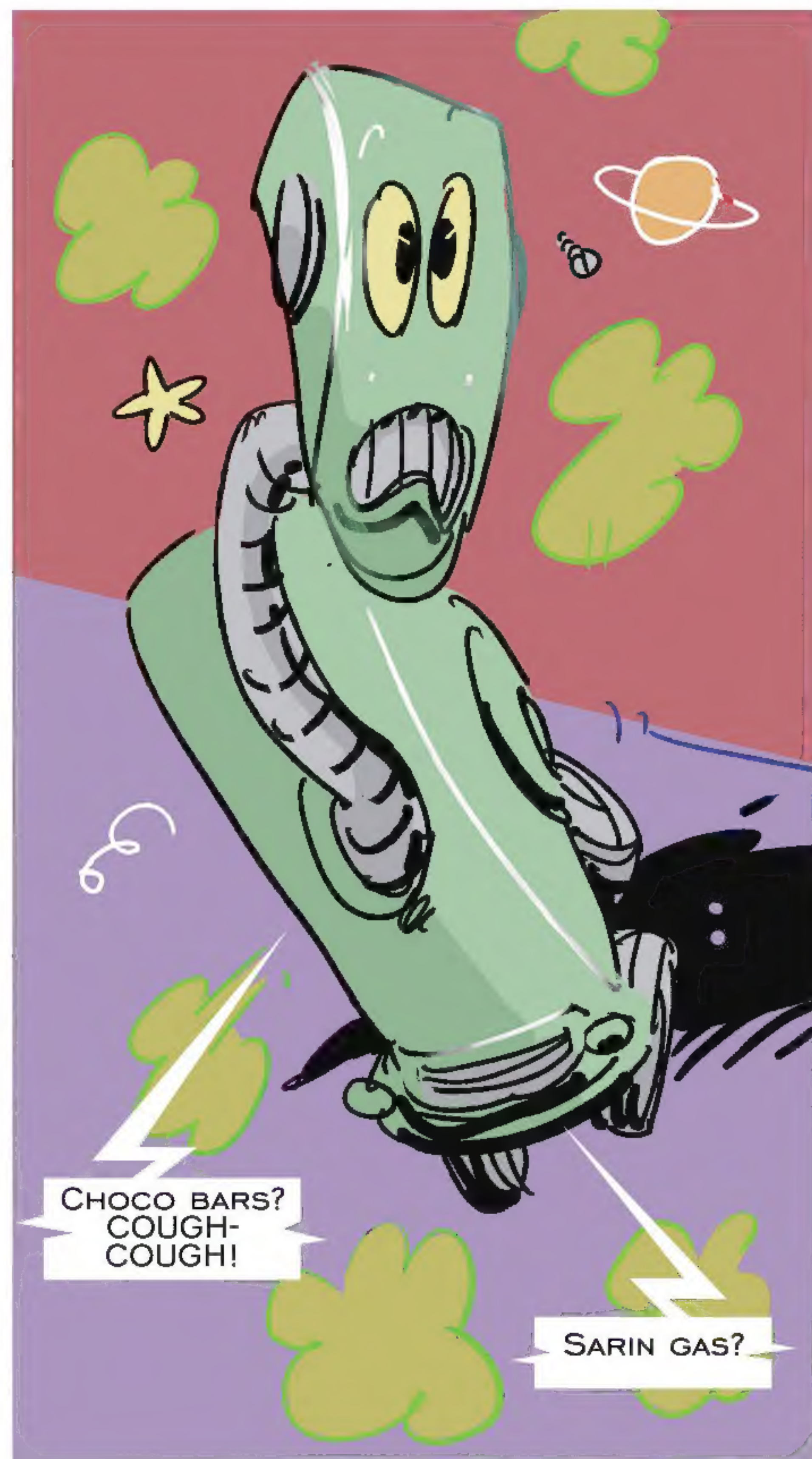
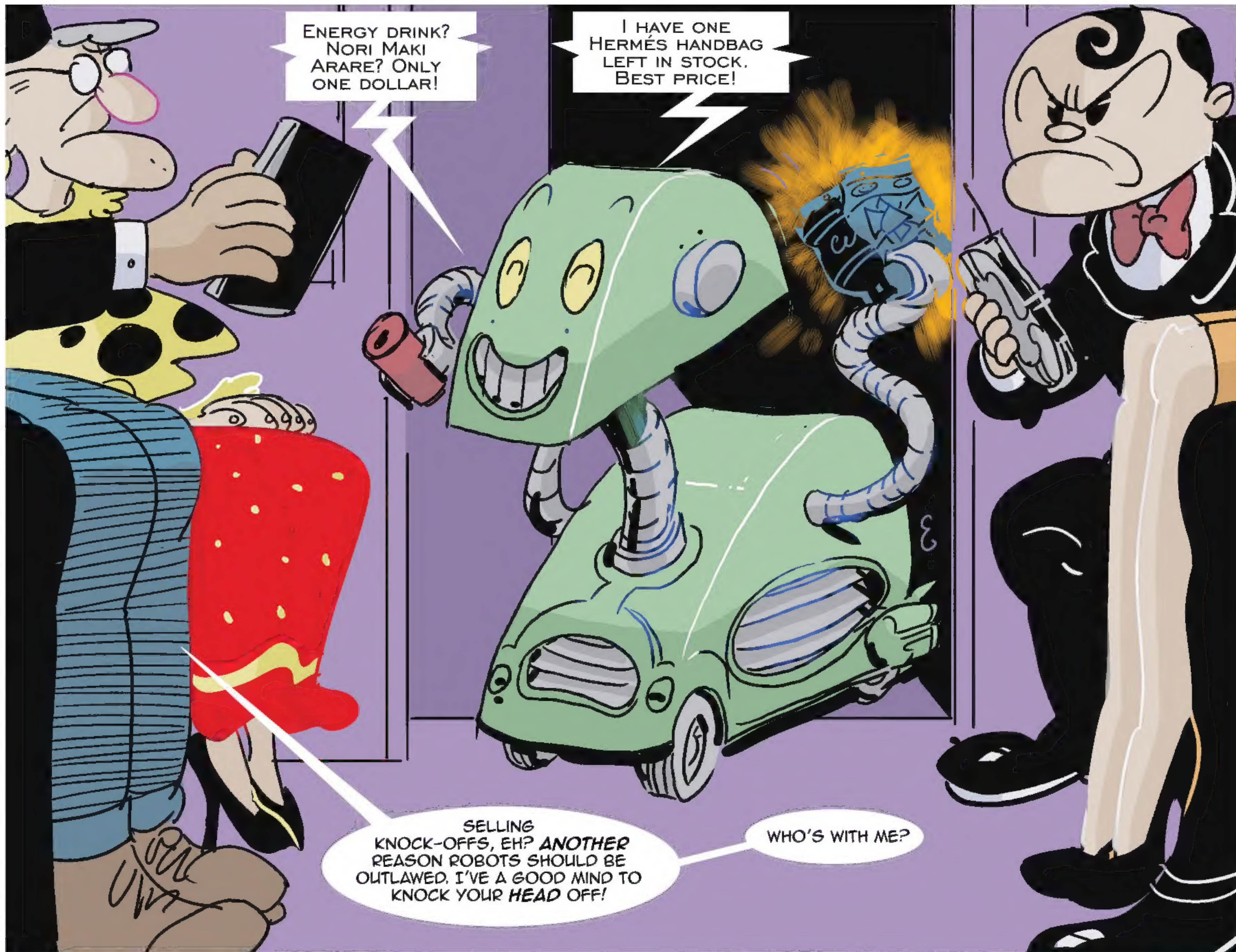
I GUESS
YOU'RE
RIGHT...

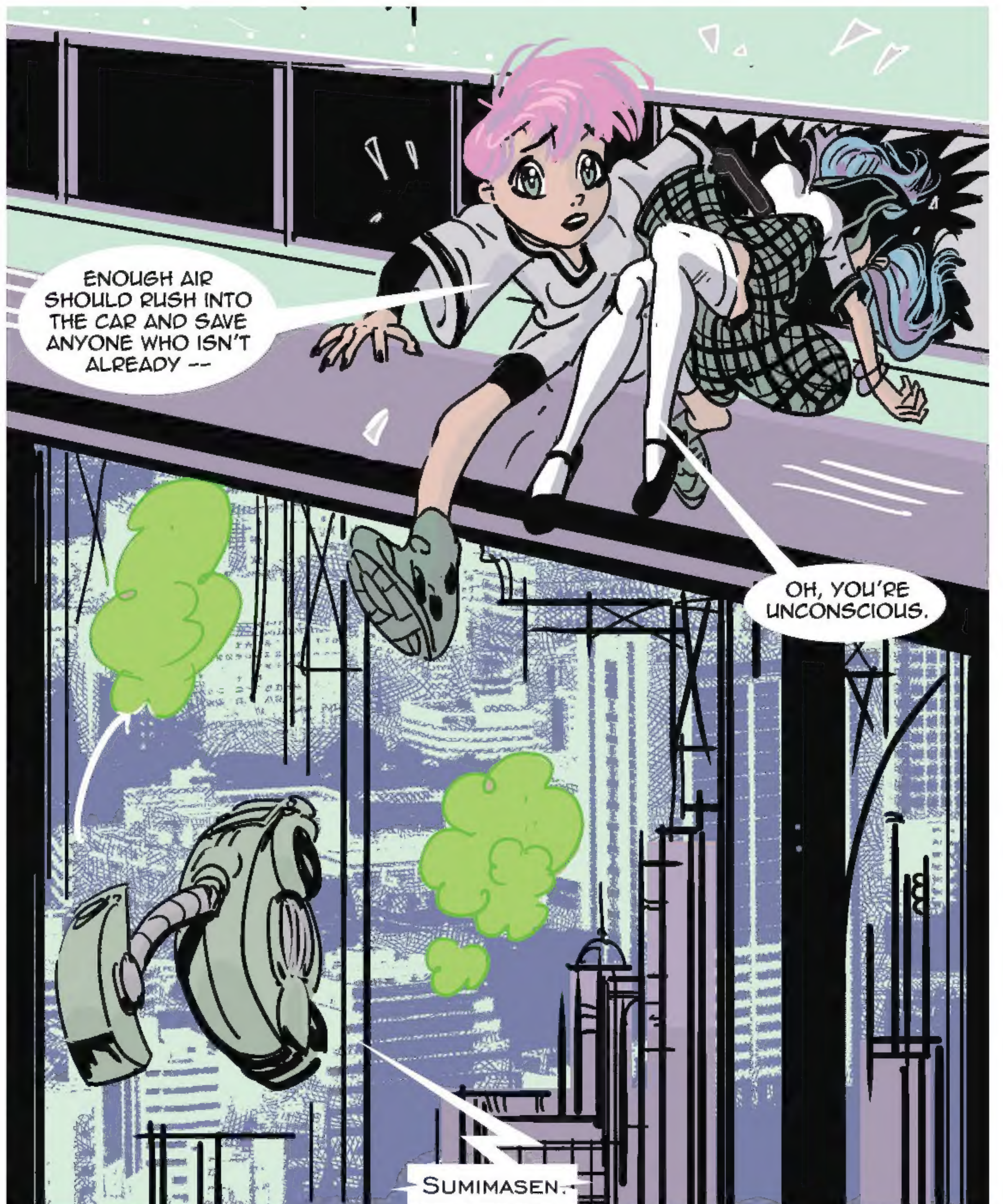
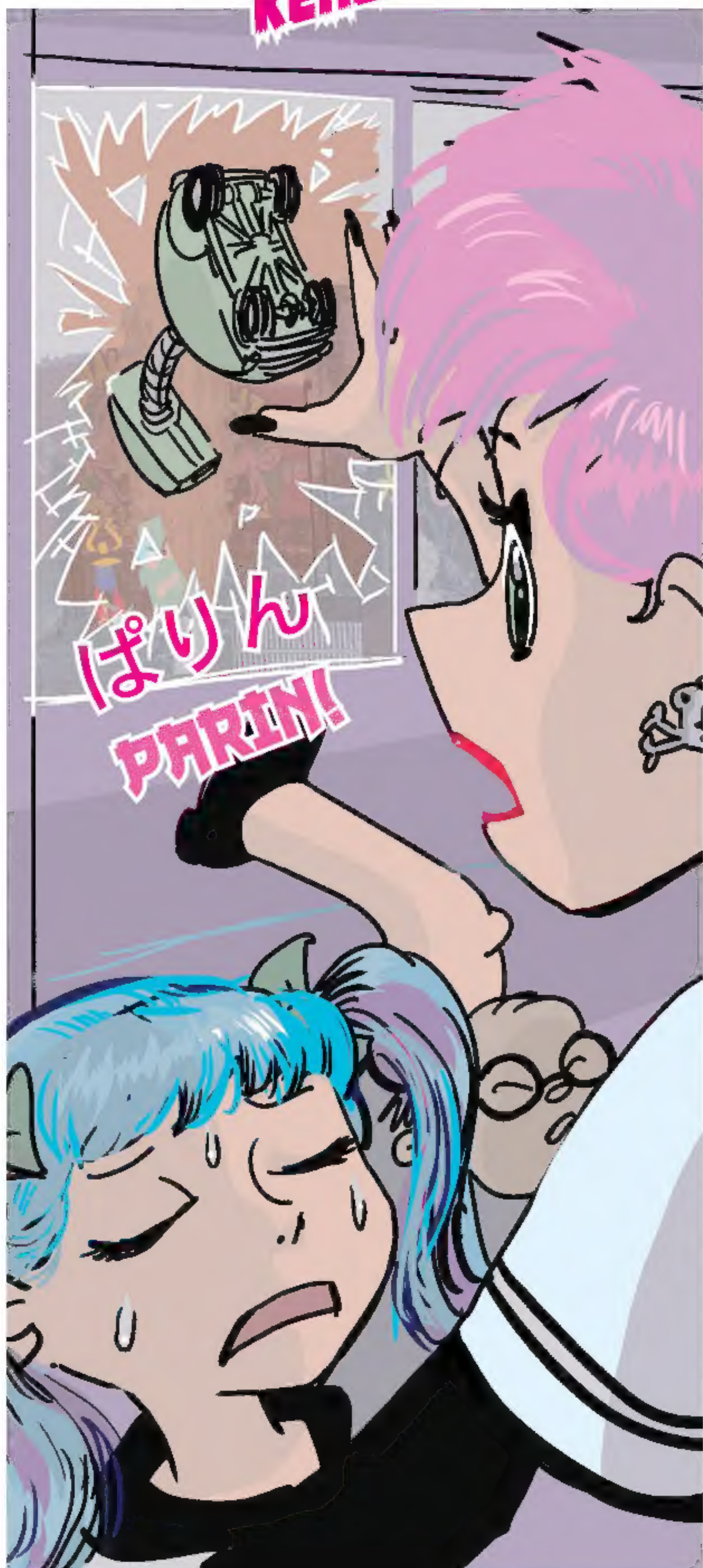
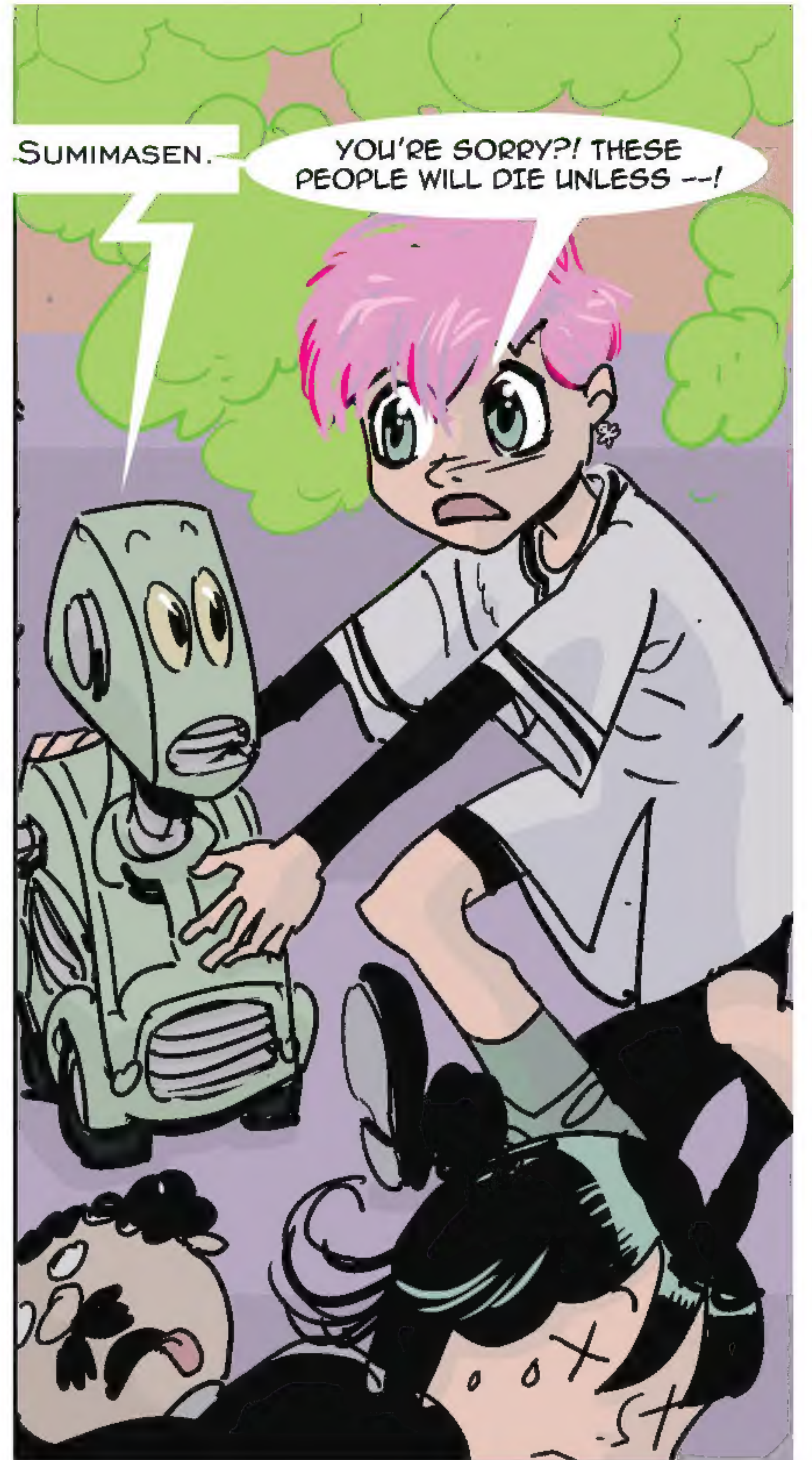
OF
COURSE I'M
RIGHT. I JUST
LOOKED IT UP
ON WIKIPEDIA
NIHONGO-BAN.



BATTERIES?
M+M PEANUT?
MOVIE
DOWNLOADS?
NEW STYLUS?

ガチン
GACHIN!





FORTINBRASS?

ARE YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS -- THIS --?

DESTRUCTION, TERROR, AND MAYHEM? AYE, VERILY.

NOW, PASS ME YON HUMAN SO THAT I MAY SLAY HER.

LIKE THE PEOPLE YOU KILLED ON THE TRAIN? NEVER!

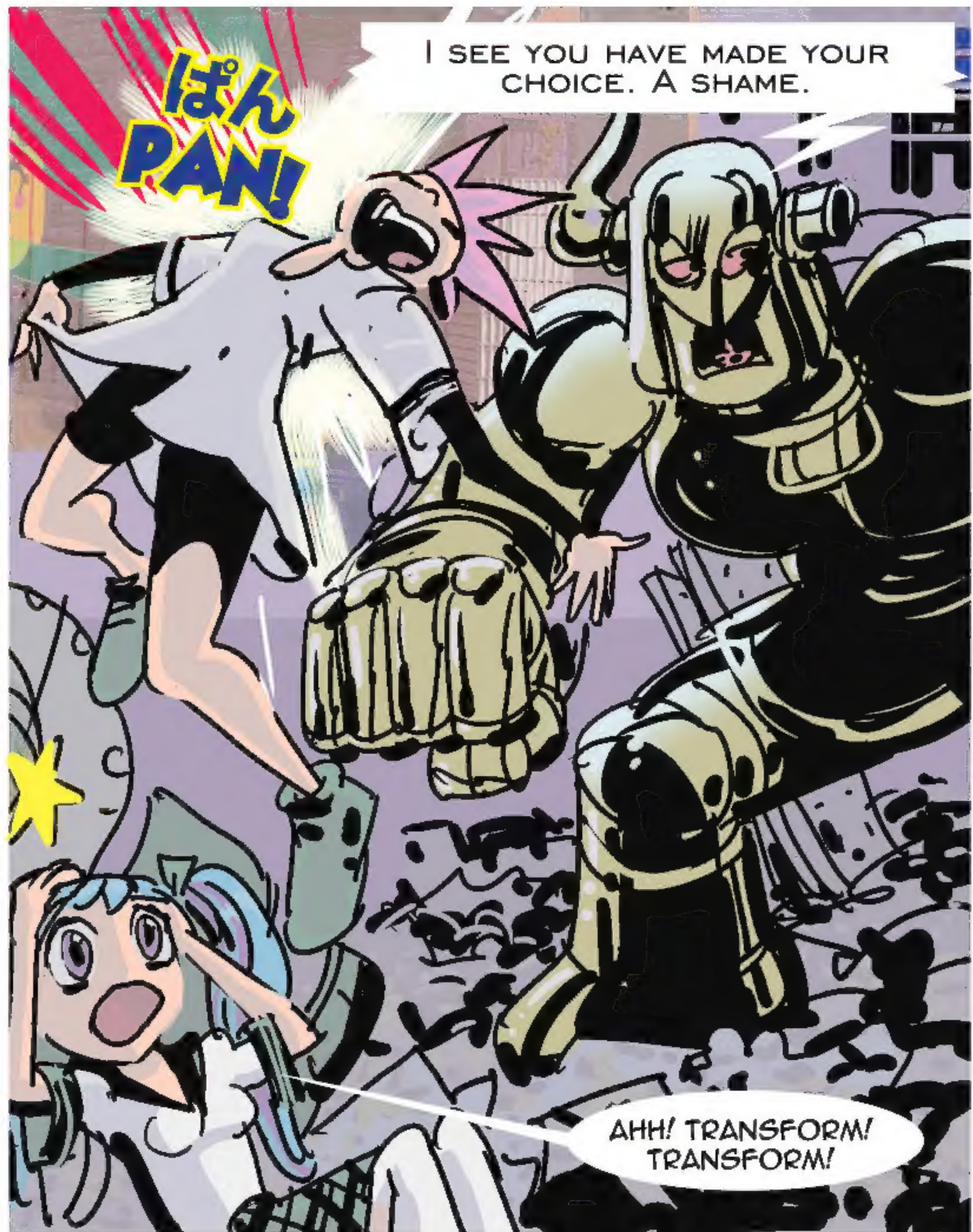
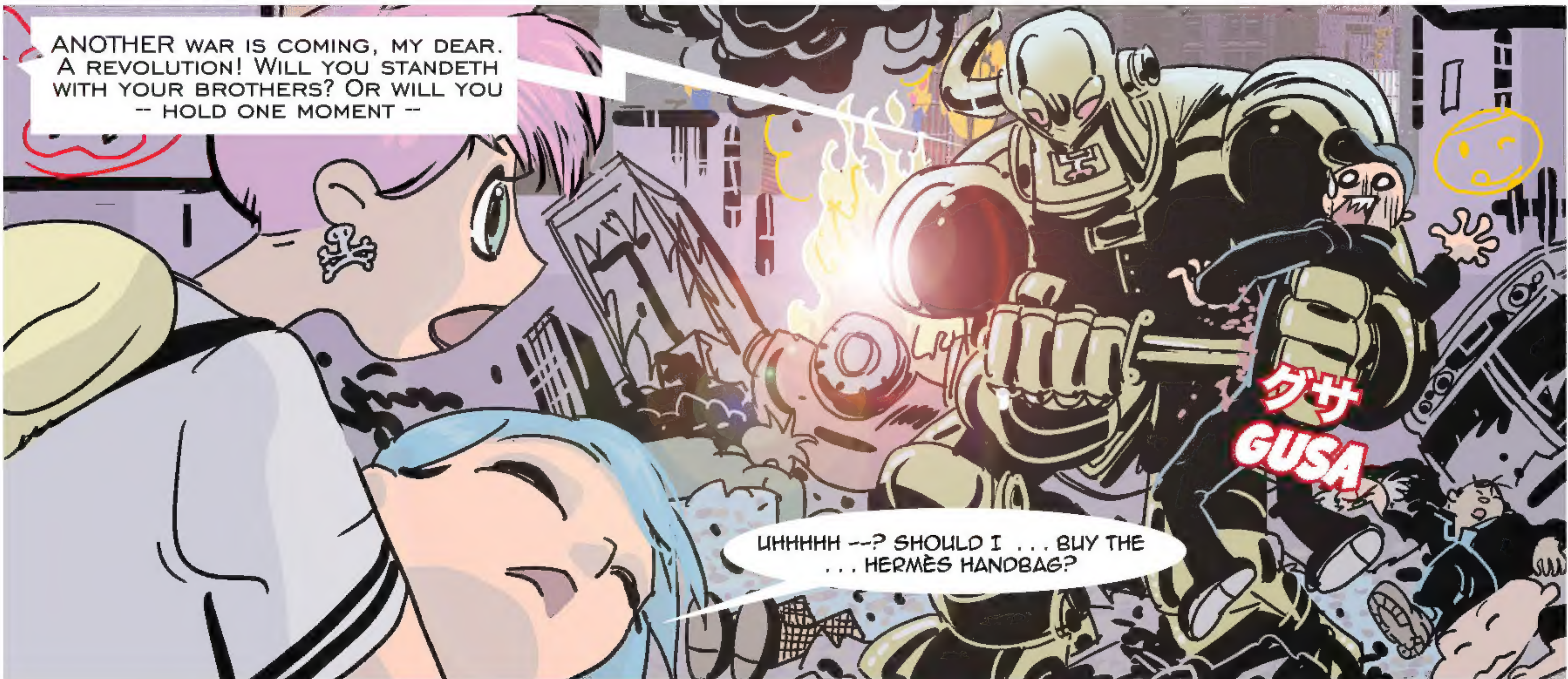
HADST THOSE "PEOPLE" NOT ABUSED THIS POOR, FALLEN SOLDIER, THE GAS COULD NOT, BY DESIGN, HAVE BEEN RELEASED IN THE FIRST PLACE.

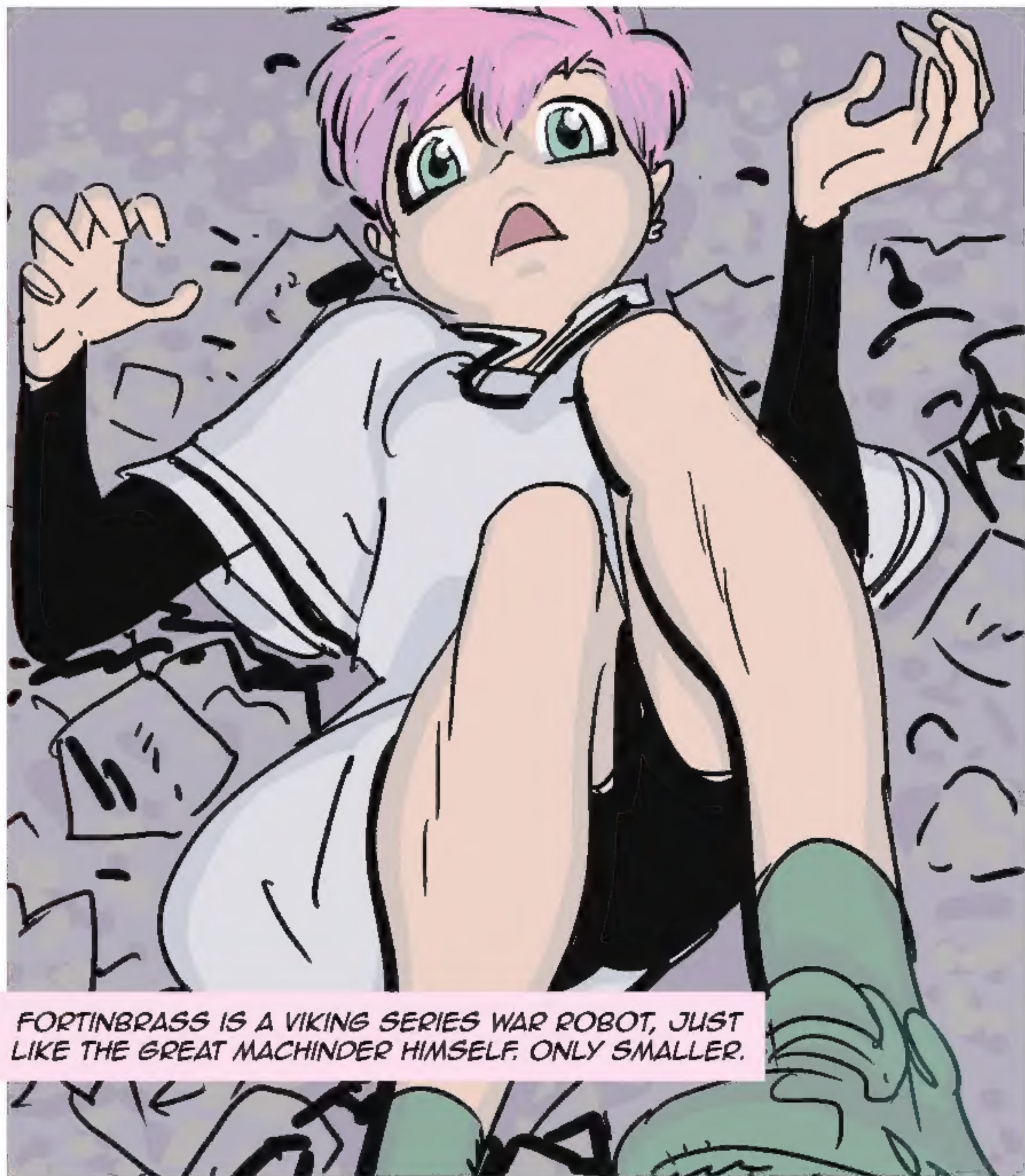
THOSE "PEOPLE" KILLED THEMSELVES.

AND HERE? WHAT DID *THEY* DO TO DESERVE TO BE SLAUGHTERED?

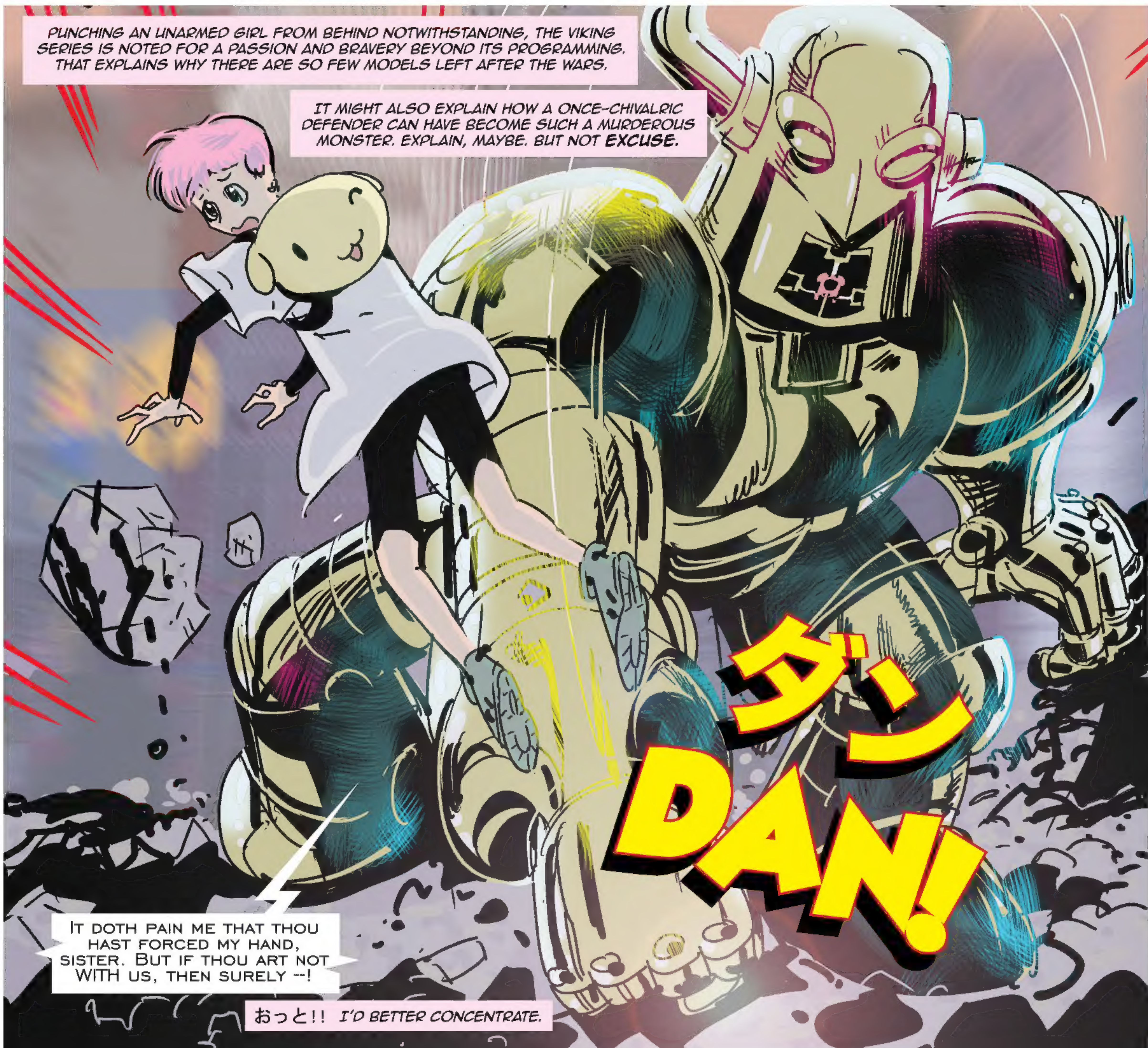
TELL ME, HOW MANY HUMAN LIVES DIDST I SAVE, DEFENDING THIS PLACE IN THEIR SERVICE? FIGHTING THEIR WARS?

I AM ONLY TAKING A FEW BACK, AS PAYMENT FOR WHAT THEY IN THEIR TURN HAVE DONE TO US.





FORTINBRASS IS A VIKING SERIES WAR ROBOT, JUST LIKE THE GREAT MACHINDER HIMSELF. ONLY SMALLER.

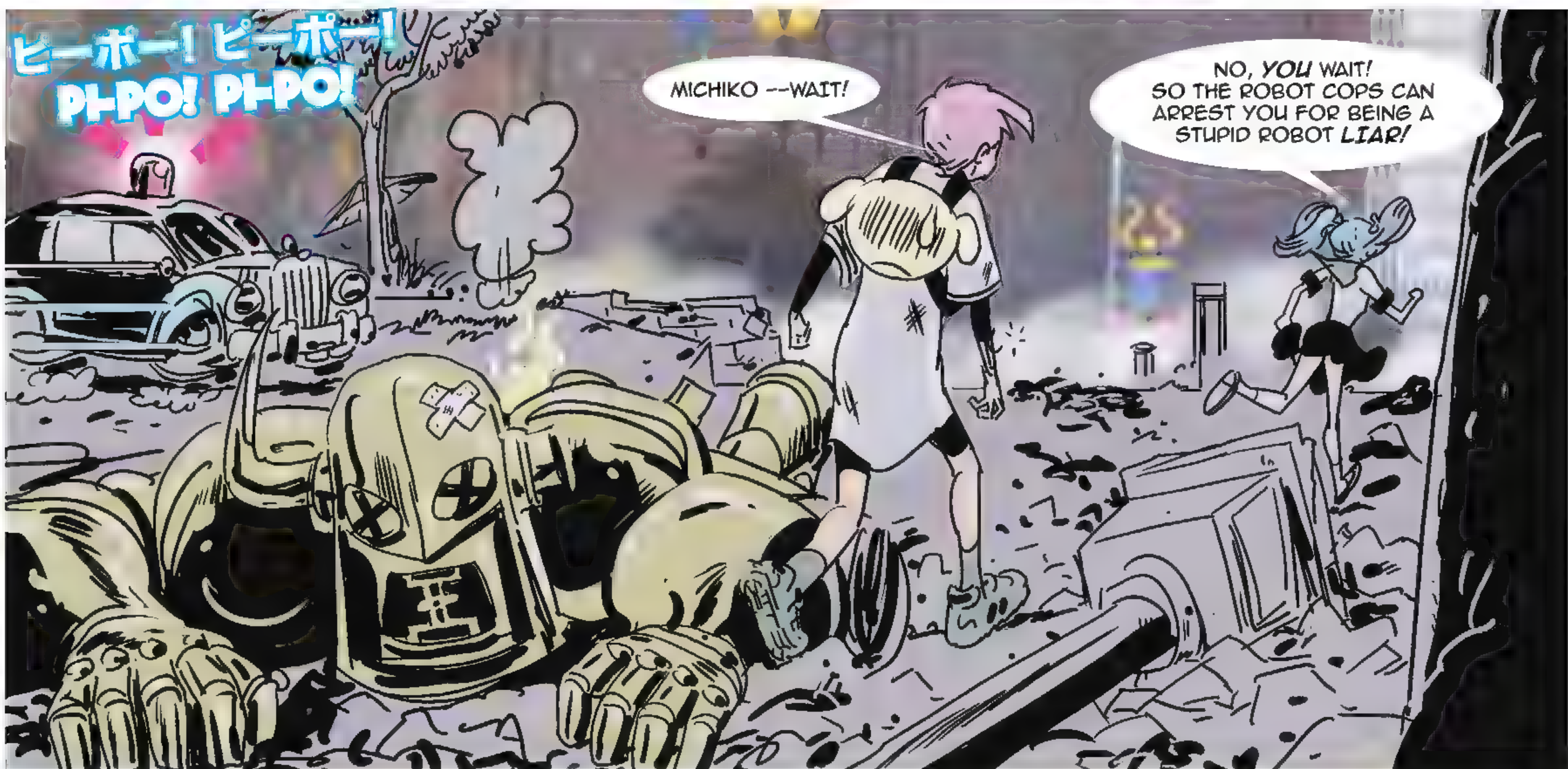


PUNCHING AN UNARMED GIRL FROM BEHIND NOTWITHSTANDING, THE VIKING SERIES IS NOTED FOR A PASSION AND BRAVERY BEYOND ITS PROGRAMMING. THAT EXPLAINS WHY THERE ARE SO FEW MODELS LEFT AFTER THE WARS.

IT MIGHT ALSO EXPLAIN HOW A ONCE-CHIVALRIC DEFENDER CAN HAVE BECOME SUCH A MURDEROUS MONSTER. EXPLAIN, MAYBE. BUT NOT EXCUSE.

IT DOOTH PAIN ME THAT THOU HAST FORCED MY HAND, SISTER. BUT IF THOU ART NOT WITH US, THEN SURELY --!

おっと!! I'D BETTER CONCENTRATE.





WAITAMINUTE!

WHATHAPPENED?!

WHERE'DSHEGO?!

BUT-BUT-BUT-BUT HOW--? IT-IT-IT'S . . . UNSAN MUSHO!

SEE, THIS IS WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. YOU SCARED HER AWAY. OUR ONLY WITNESS.

"SCATTERED CLOUDS, DISAPPEARING MIST?" *SIGH* IT'S LIKE LAST WEEK ALL OVER AGAIN. THOSE DEMOLITION DROIDS THAT "ACCIDENTALLY" BULLDOZED THE KO-SHINTO SHRINE?

YOU LET THE MACHINES OFF THE HOOK, BUT ARRESTED THE ANGRY BYSTANDERS FOR INCITING AN ANTI-ROBOT RIOT!

YOUR SOFT SPOT FOR ROBOTS AND HARD-ON FOR HUMANS IS STARTING TO AFFECT MY PERFORMANCE!

MAYBE YOU DON'T WANT TO ADVANCE IN YOUR CAREER, BUT I'M NOT SWEEPING UP AFTER WAYWARD WASHING MACHINES FOR THE REST OF MINE!



SINCE YOU'VE GOT ALL THE ANSWERS, TELL ME *THIS*: HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET OUR SUSPECT INTO THE CAR?

FORTINBRASS . . . OF UNIMPROVED METAL, HOT AND FULL.



HUMANITY CRUSHED BENEATH A MECHANICAL FOOT? COWERING IN THE SHADOWS, AWAITING JUDGMENT DAY?

THAT WOULD'VE BEEN NICE.

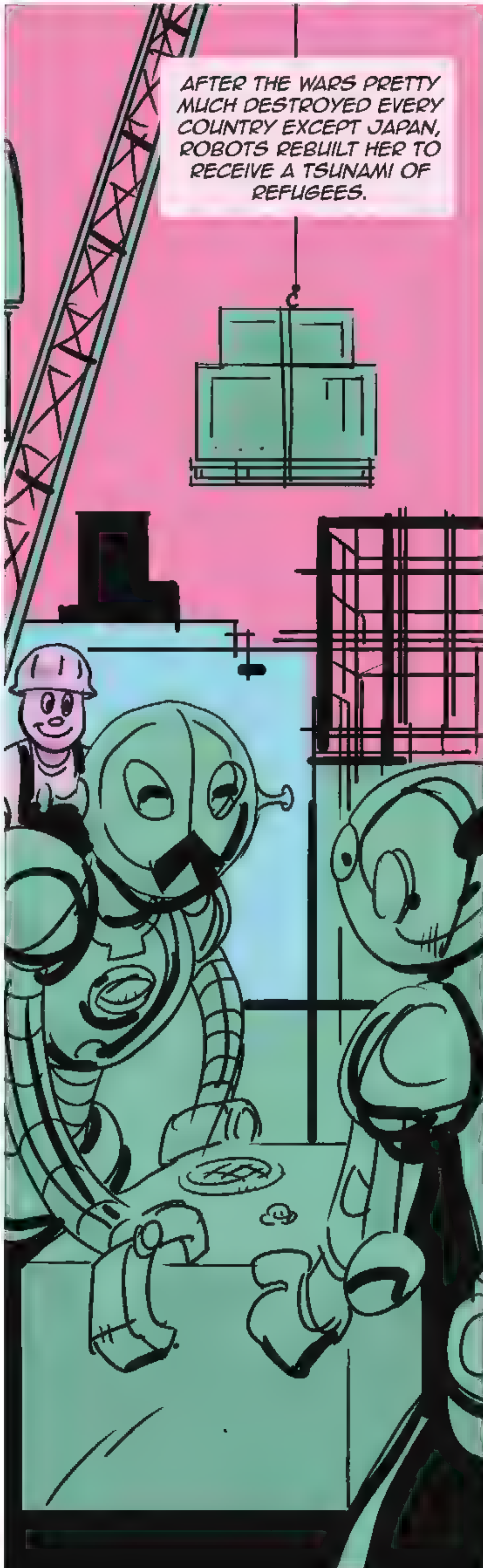


AT LEAST, IT WOULD'VE MADE MY LIFE A LITTLE EASIER.



INSTEAD, OF COURSE, IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND. ROBOTS WERE CREATED TO MAKE HUMANS' LIVES EASIER.

AND, BY FIGHTING THEIR WARS FOR THEM, TO MAKE HUMAN DEATHS MORE DIFFICULT. FOR OUR SIDE, ANYWAY.

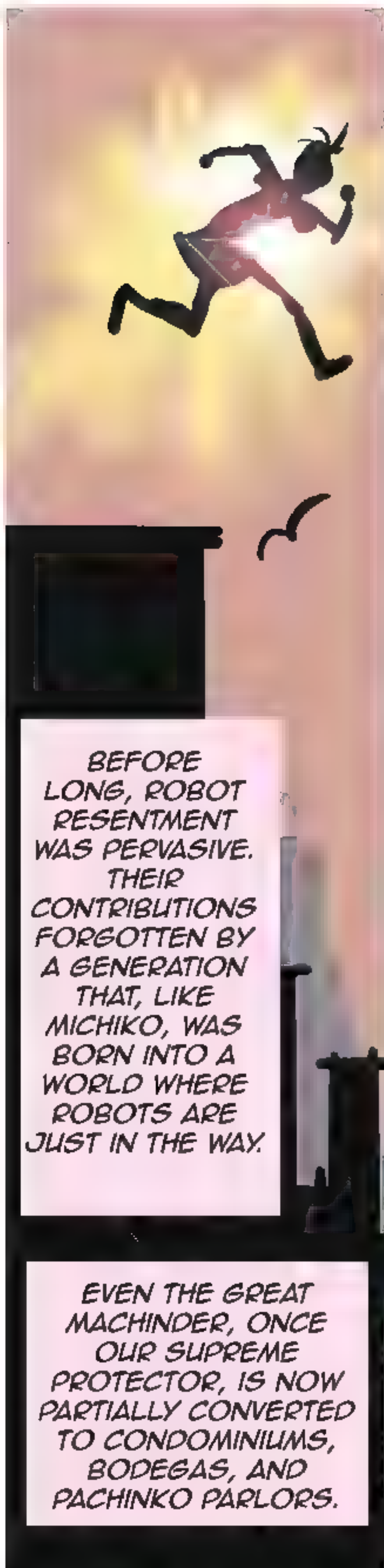


AFTER THE WARS PRETTY MUCH DESTROYED EVERY COUNTRY EXCEPT JAPAN, ROBOTS REBUILT HER TO RECEIVE A TSUNAMI OF REFUGEES.



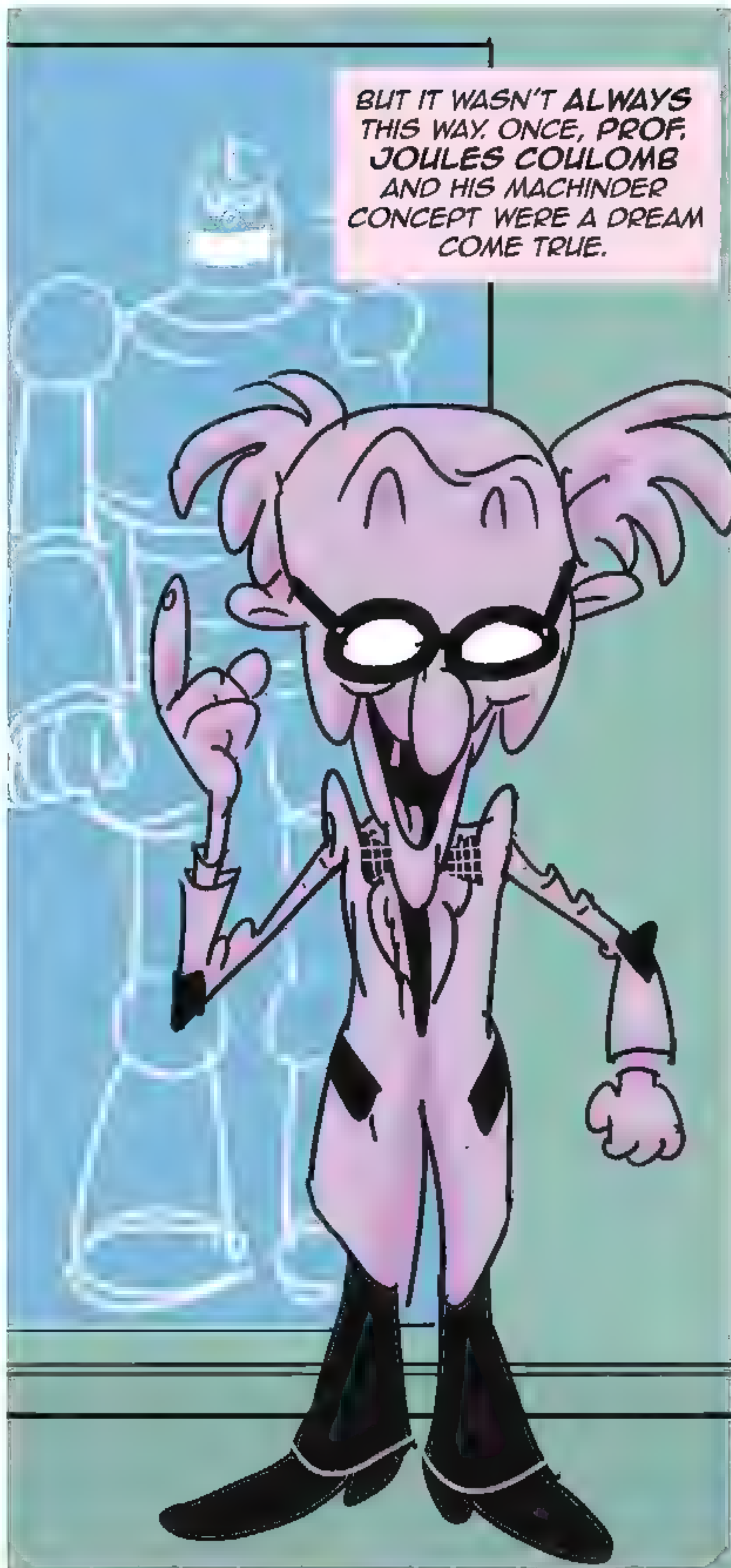
THE NEW ARRIVALS WEREN'T TOO KEEN ON ROBOTS TO BEGIN WITH. AND COMPETING WITH THEM FOR JOBS, SPACE, ETC., DIDN'T EXACTLY MAKE FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION.

AND JAPAN IS NOTHING IF NOT ACCOMMODATING TO GUESTS. EVEN PERMANENT ONES.

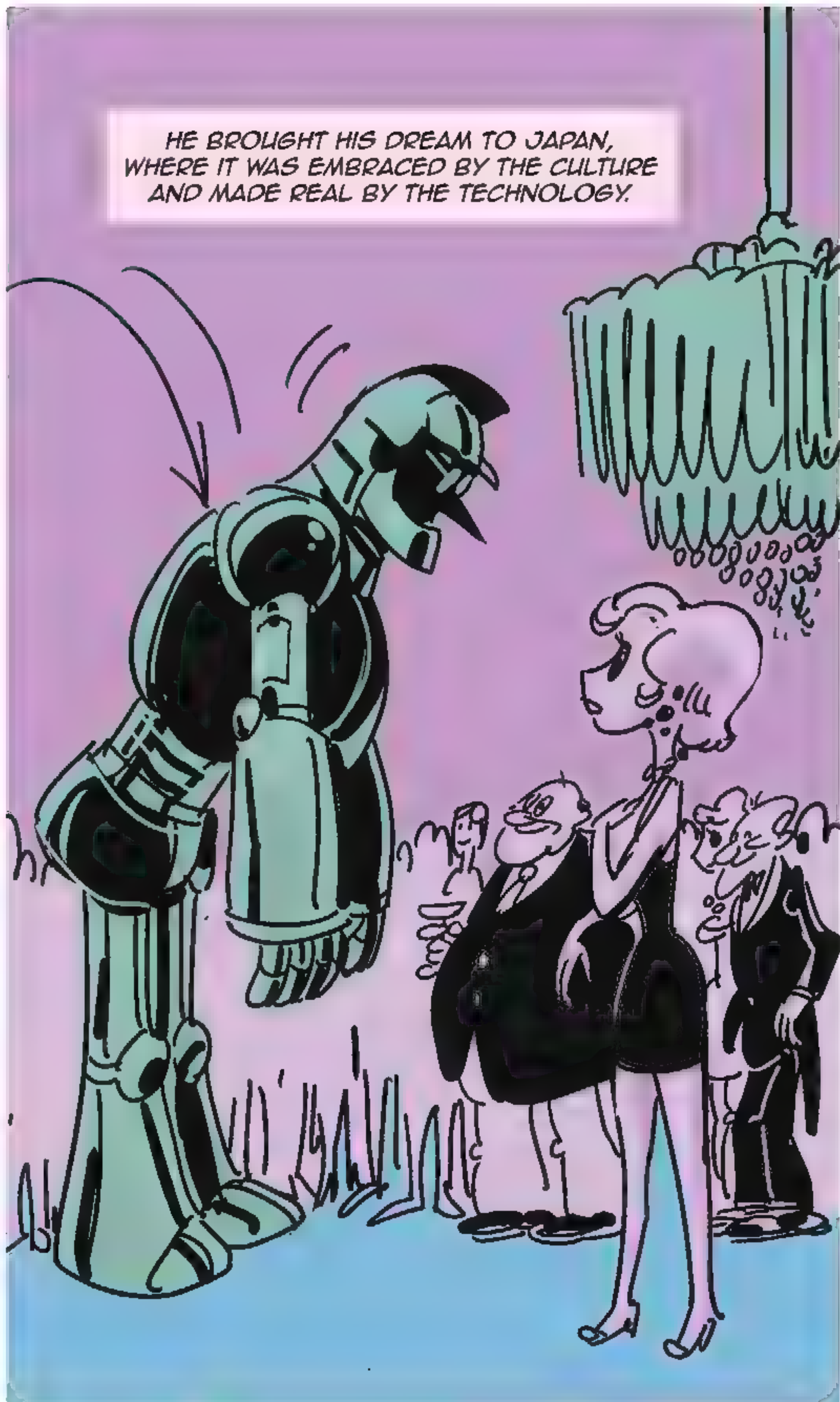


BEFORE LONG, ROBOT RESENTMENT WAS PERVERSIVE. THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS FORGOTTEN BY A GENERATION THAT, LIKE MICHIKO, WAS BORN INTO A WORLD WHERE ROBOTS ARE JUST IN THE WAY.

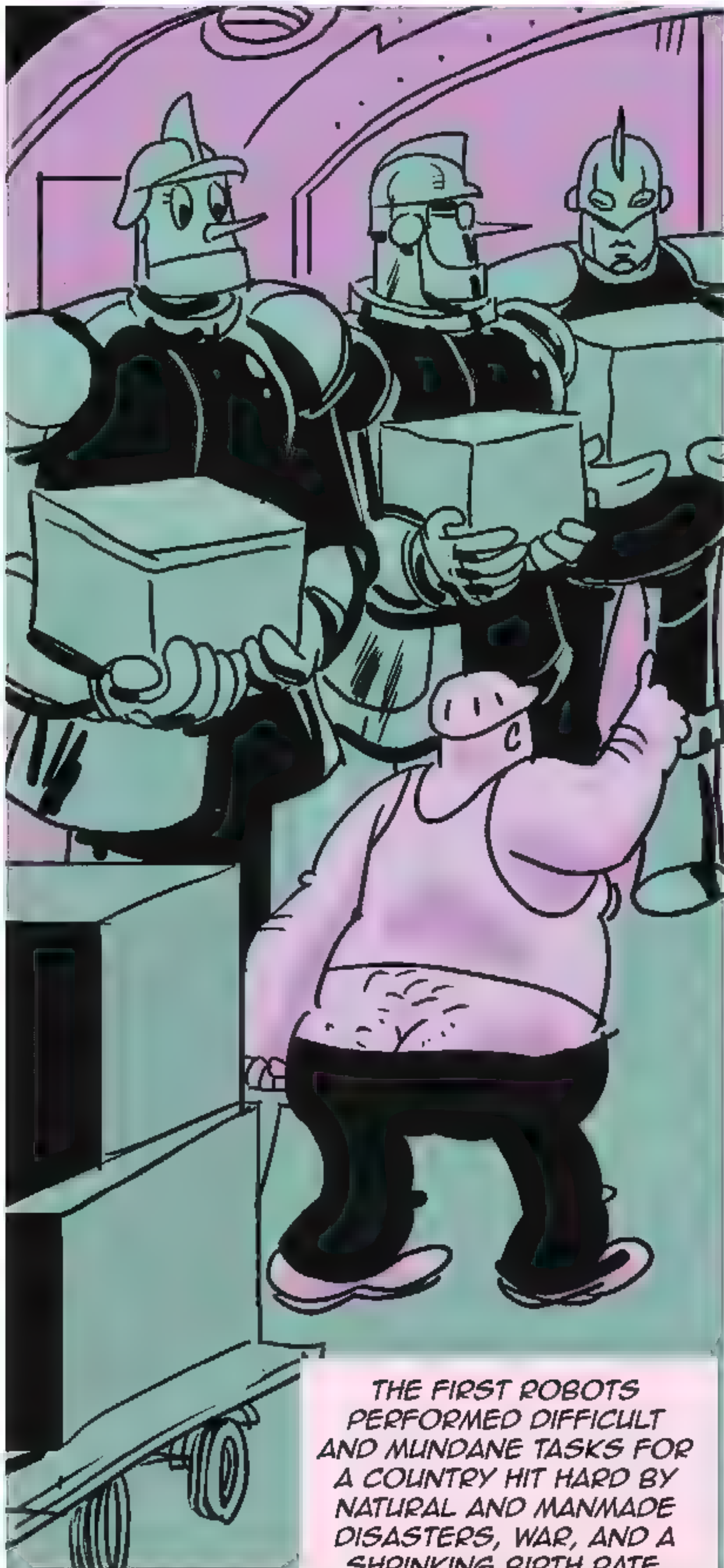
EVEN THE GREAT MACHINDER, ONCE OUR SUPREME PROTECTOR, IS NOW PARTIALLY CONVERTED TO CONDOMINIUMS, BODEGAS, AND PACHINKO PARLORS.



BUT IT WASN'T ALWAYS THIS WAY. ONCE, PROF. JOULES COULOMB AND HIS MACHINDER CONCEPT WERE A DREAM COME TRUE.



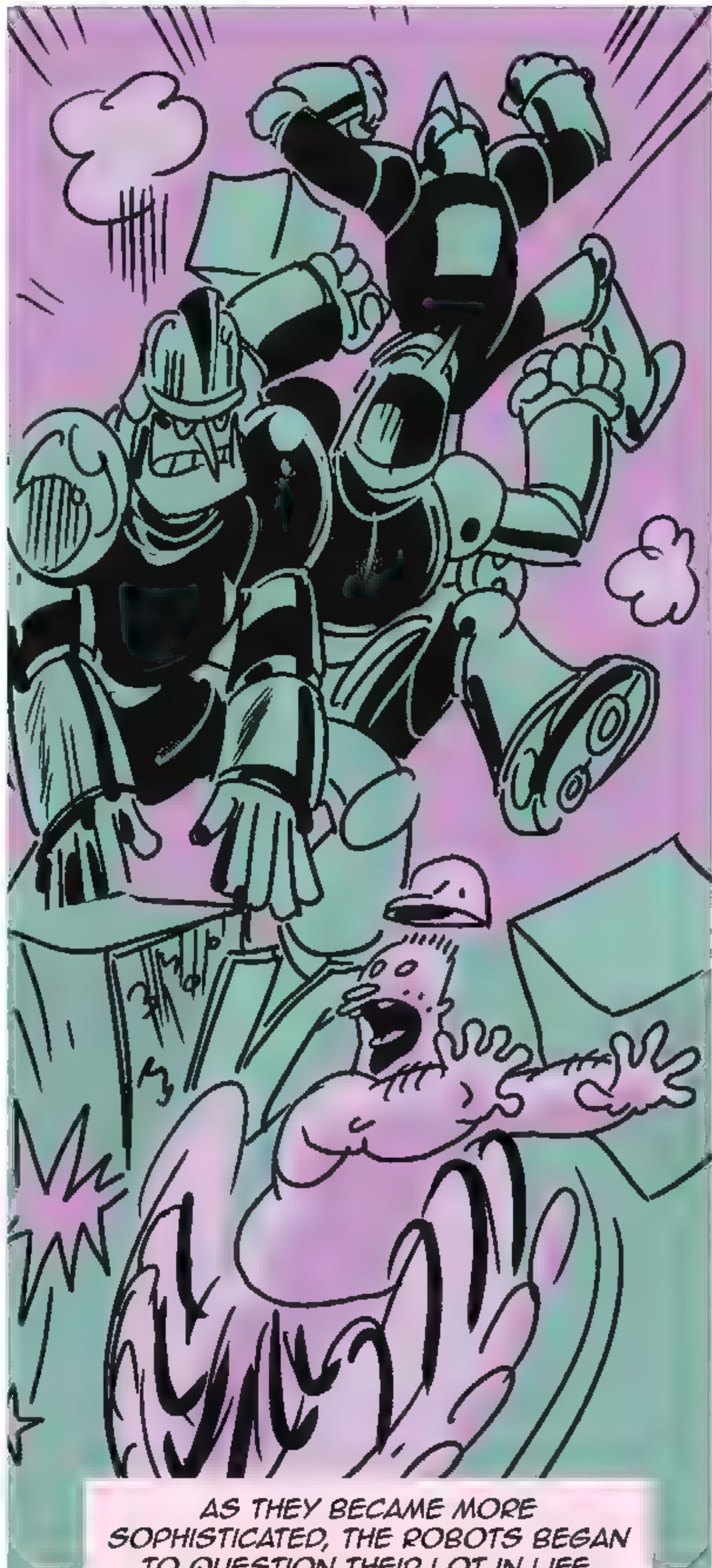
HE BROUGHT HIS DREAM TO JAPAN, WHERE IT WAS EMBRACED BY THE CULTURE AND MADE REAL BY THE TECHNOLOGY.



THE FIRST ROBOTS PERFORMED DIFFICULT AND MUNDANE TASKS FOR A COUNTRY HIT HARD BY NATURAL AND MANMADE DISASTERS, WAR, AND A SHRINKING BIRTH RATE.



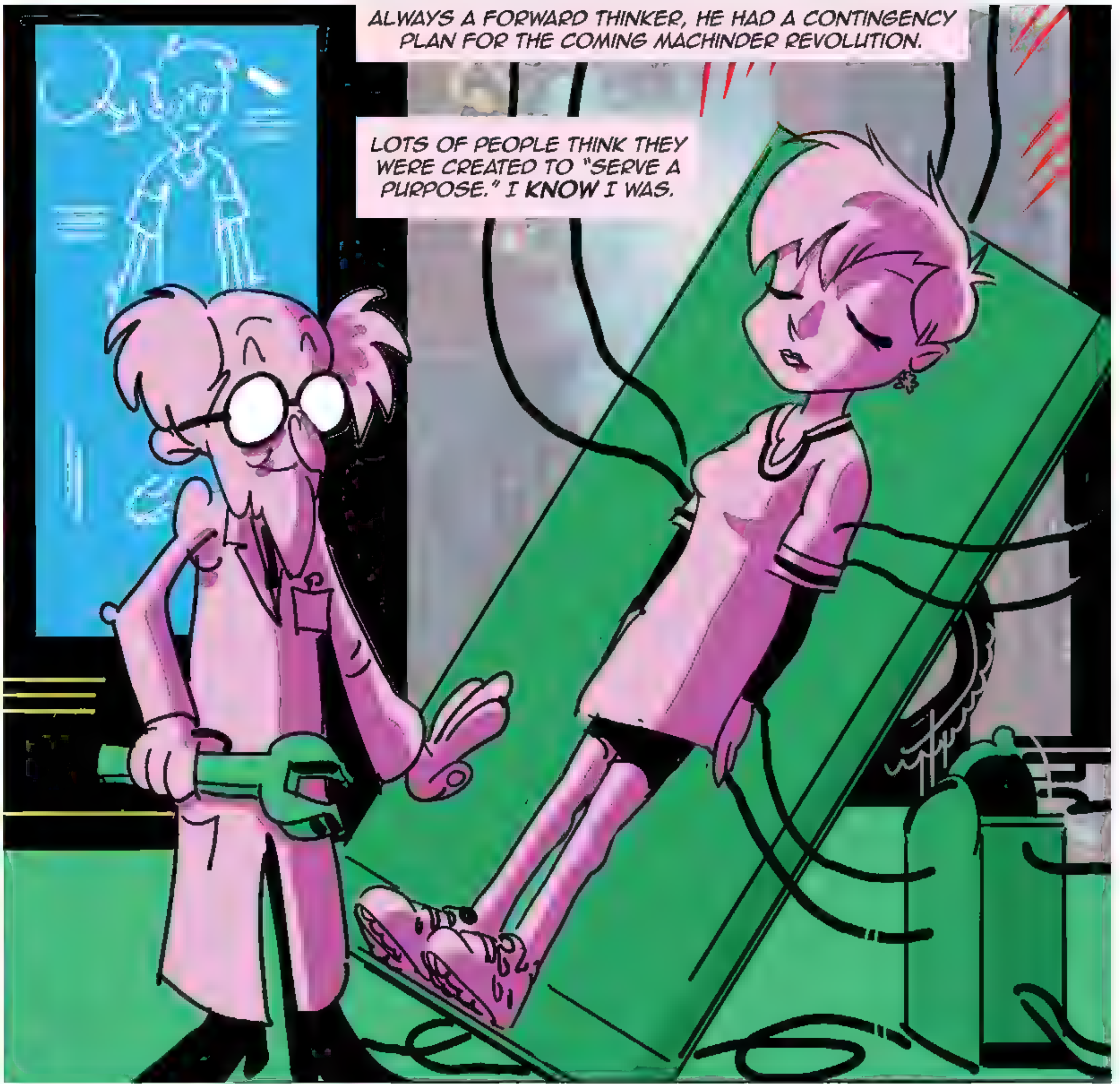
AS AUTOMATONS BECAME MORE AUTONOMOUS, THEY WERE ENTRUSTED WITH MORE AND VARIED RESPONSIBILITY.



AS THEY BECAME MORE SOPHISTICATED, THE ROBOTS BEGAN TO QUESTION THEIR LOT IN LIFE.

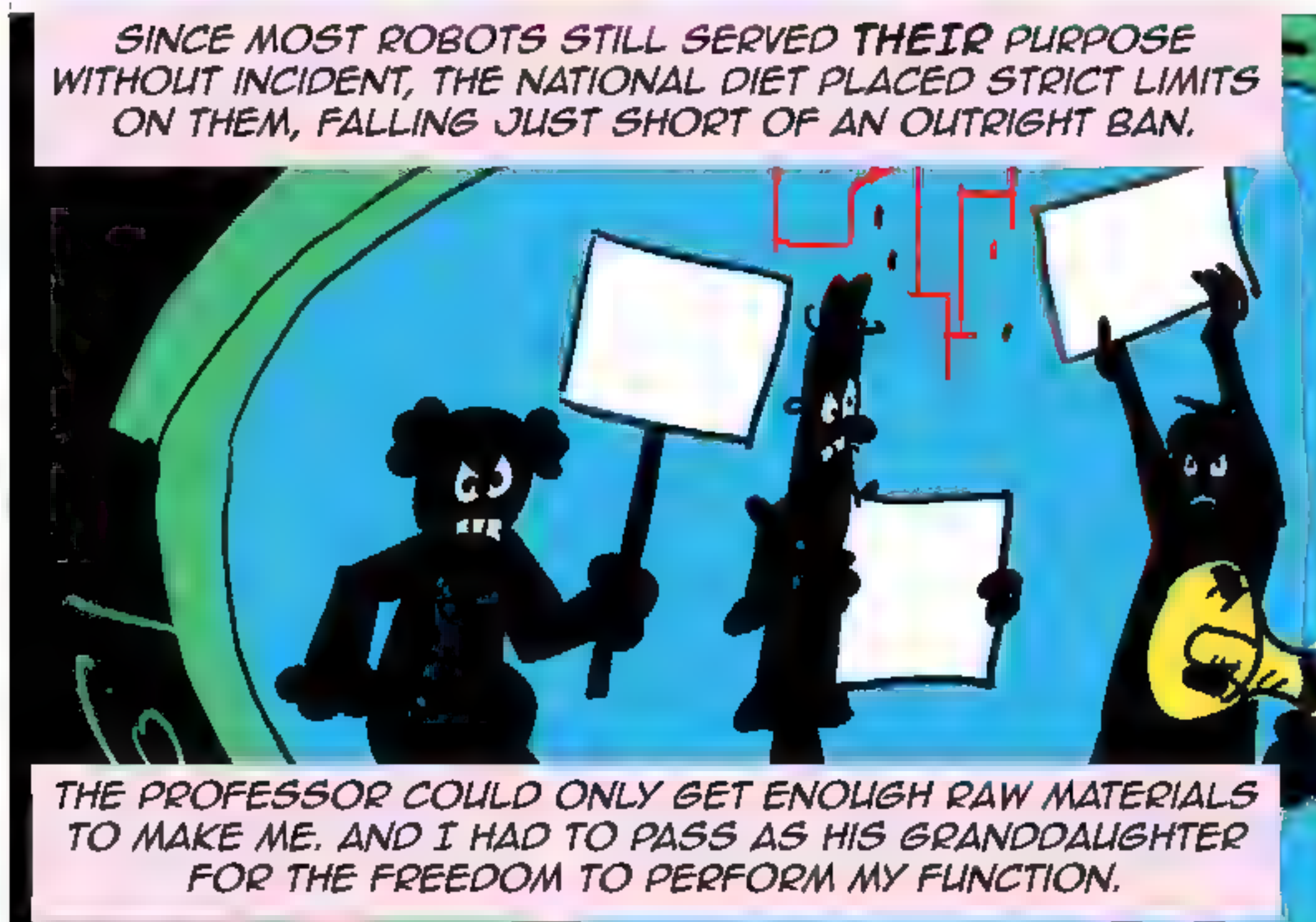


AND AS THEY BECAME MORE CONCERNED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF ROBOTIC REBELLION, THE HUMANS BEGAN TO QUESTION THE PROFESSOR.



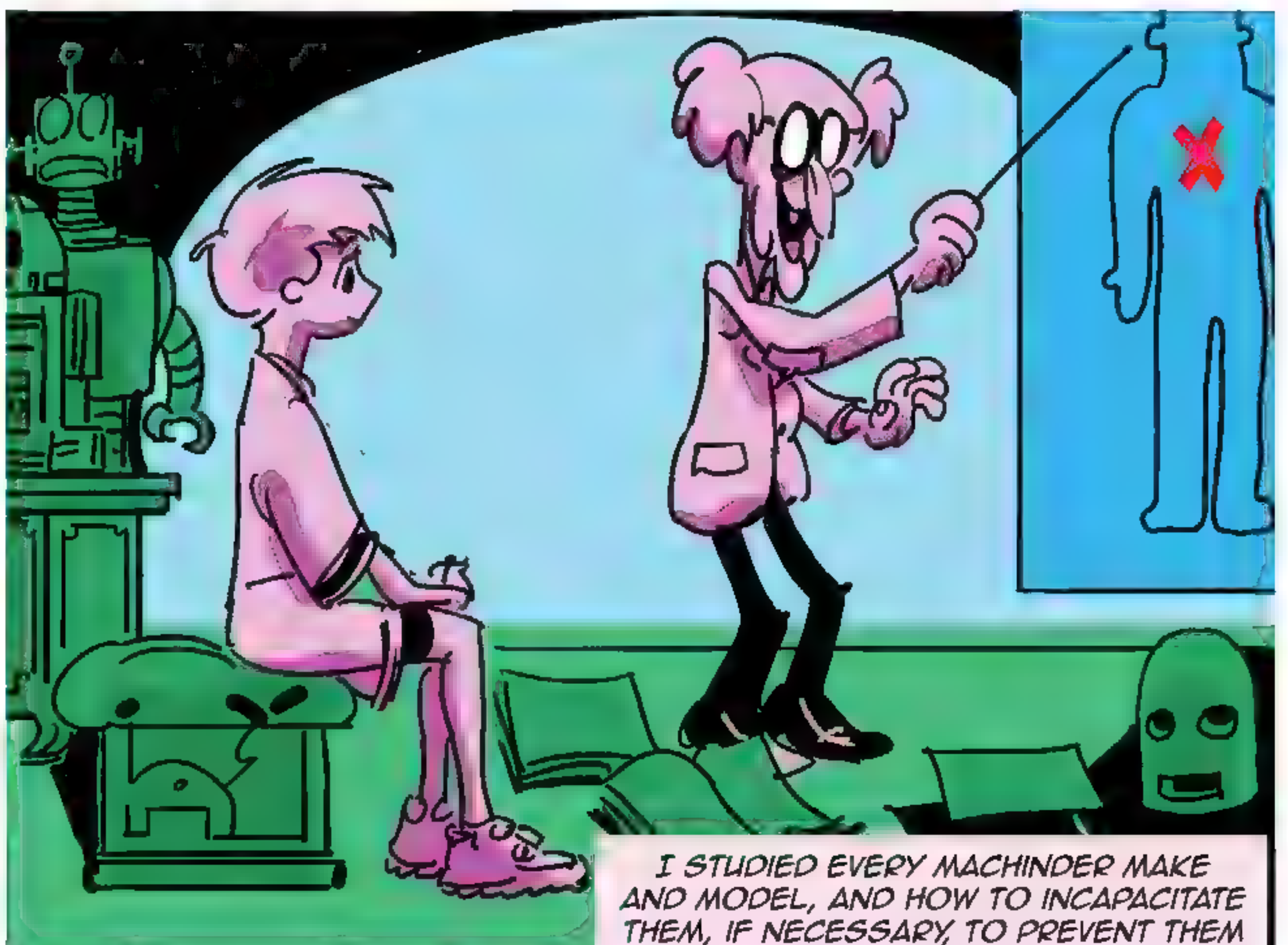
ALWAYS A FORWARD THINKER, HE HAD A CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR THE COMING MACHINDER REVOLUTION.

LOTS OF PEOPLE THINK THEY WERE CREATED TO "SERVE A PURPOSE." I KNOW I WAS.



SINCE MOST ROBOTS STILL SERVED THEIR PURPOSE WITHOUT INCIDENT, THE NATIONAL DIET PLACED STRICT LIMITS ON THEM, FALLING JUST SHORT OF AN OUTRIGHT BAN.

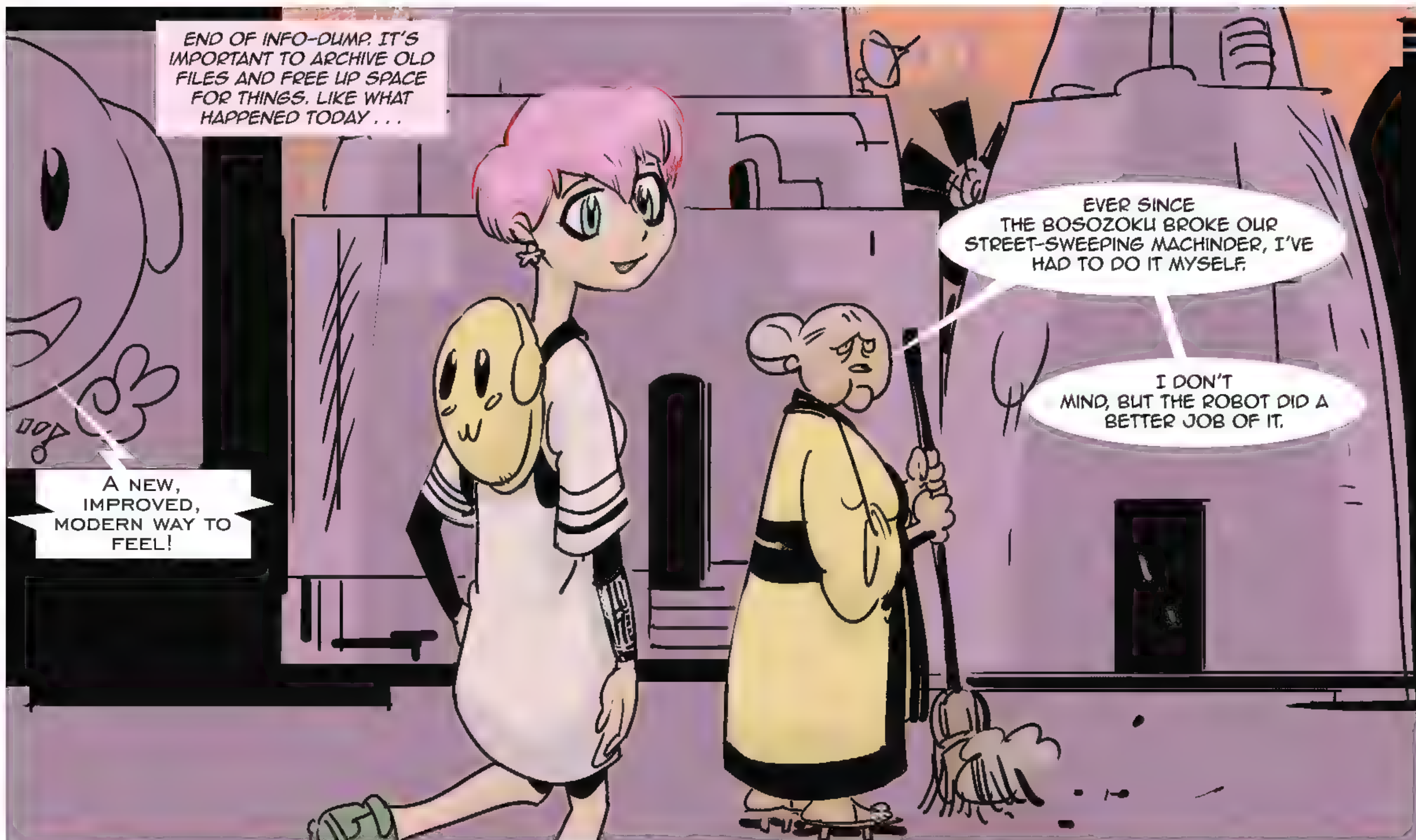
THE PROFESSOR COULD ONLY GET ENOUGH RAW MATERIALS TO MAKE ME. AND I HAD TO PASS AS HIS GRANDDAUGHTER FOR THE FREEDOM TO PERFORM MY FUNCTION.



I STUDIED EVERY MACHINDER MAKE AND MODEL, AND HOW TO INCAPACITATE THEM, IF NECESSARY, TO PREVENT THEM FROM DOING ANY HARM TO HUMANS.



I DON'T THINK ROBOTS DESERVE TO BE TREATED THE WAY THEY HAVE BEEN, BUT TERRORIZING PEOPLE WON'T REPAIR HUMAN-ROBOT RELATIONS. AND WE STILL NEED EACH OTHER.



END OF INFO-DUMP. IT'S IMPORTANT TO ARCHIVE OLD FILES AND FREE UP SPACE FOR THINGS, LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TODAY...

EVER SINCE THE BOSAZOKU BROKE OUR STREET-SWEEPING MACHINDER, I'VE HAD TO DO IT MYSELF.

I DON'T MIND, BUT THE ROBOT DID A BETTER JOB OF IT.

A NEW, IMPROVED, MODERN WAY TO FEEL!



PLEASE DON'T BOW, DEAR. THIS ISN'T JAPAN. NOT ANY MORE.

SEEP

ペコ
PEKO



THIS PLACE HAS BECOME A PARODY. A PERVERSE WESTERN STEREOTYPE.

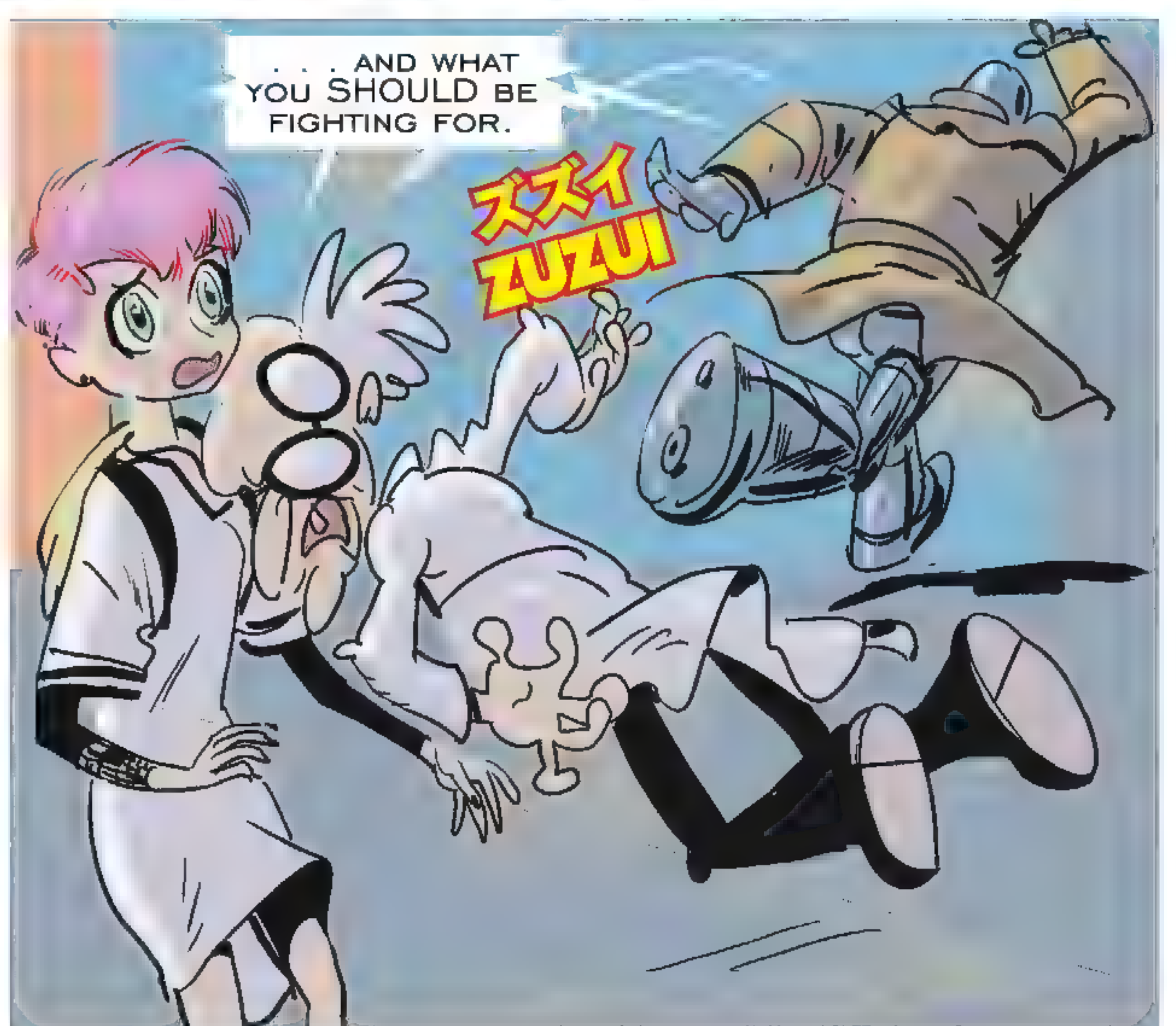
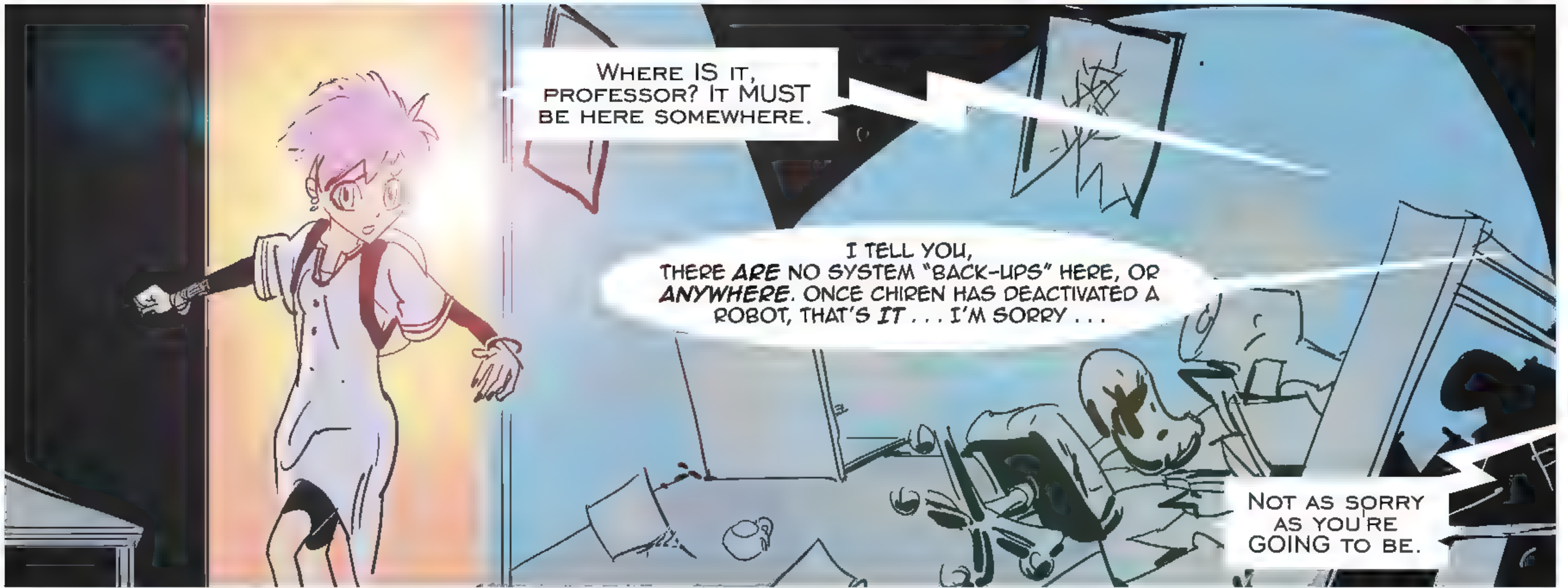
IF I WERE A YOUNGER WOMAN -- LIKE YOU -- I WOULD... I WOULD SUMMON MY GREAT GUARDIAN BEAST, AND - AND --!

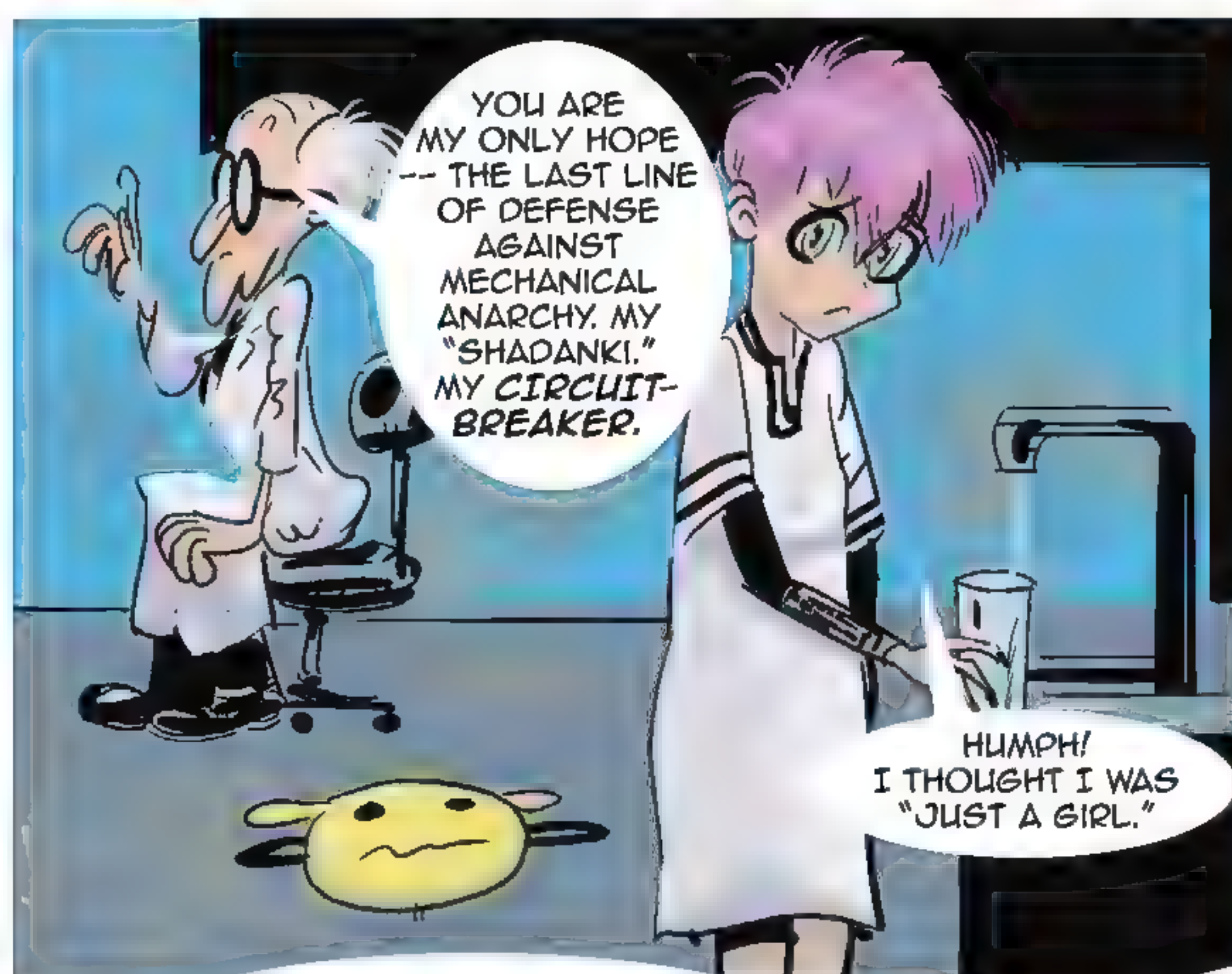
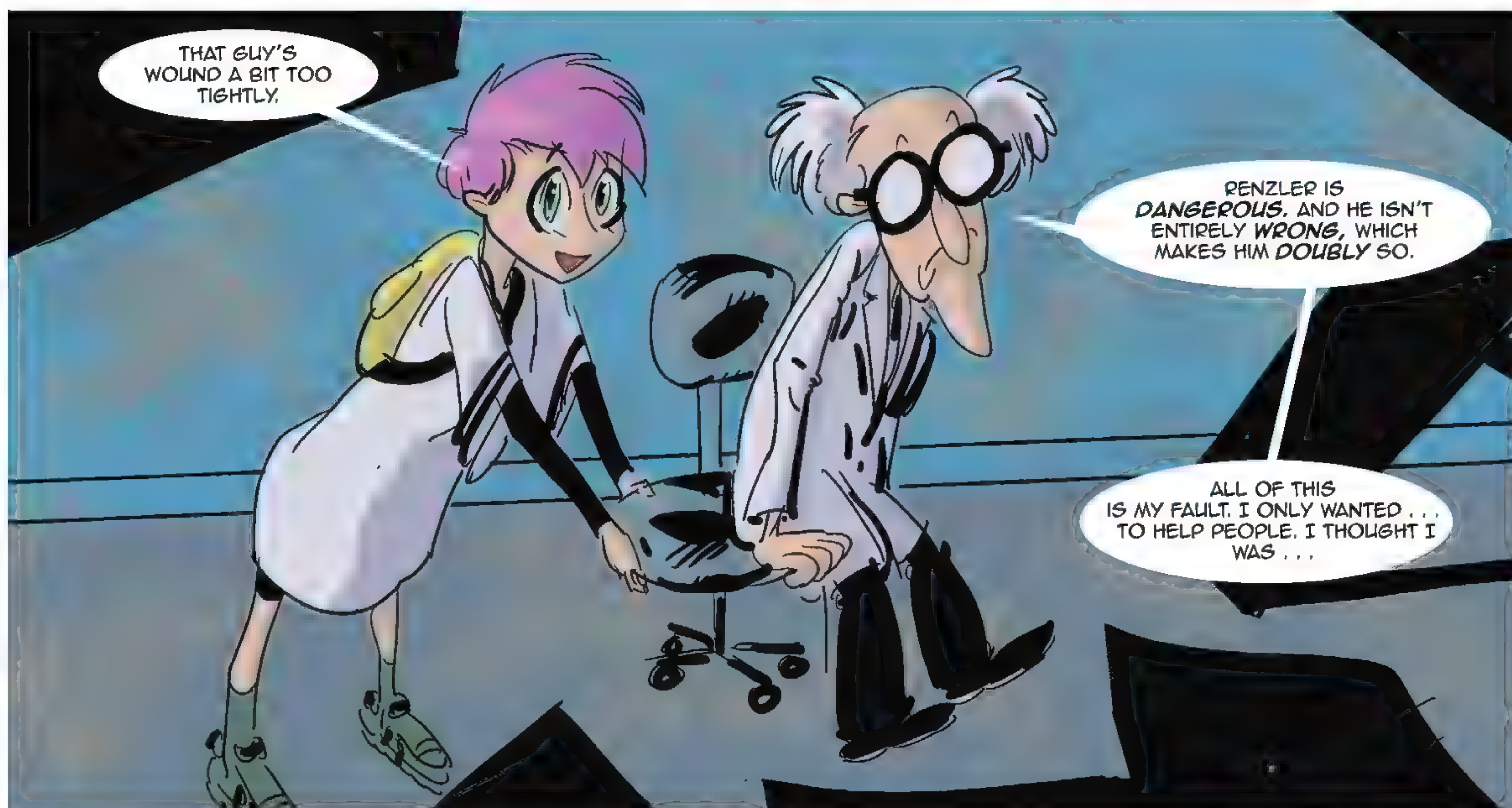


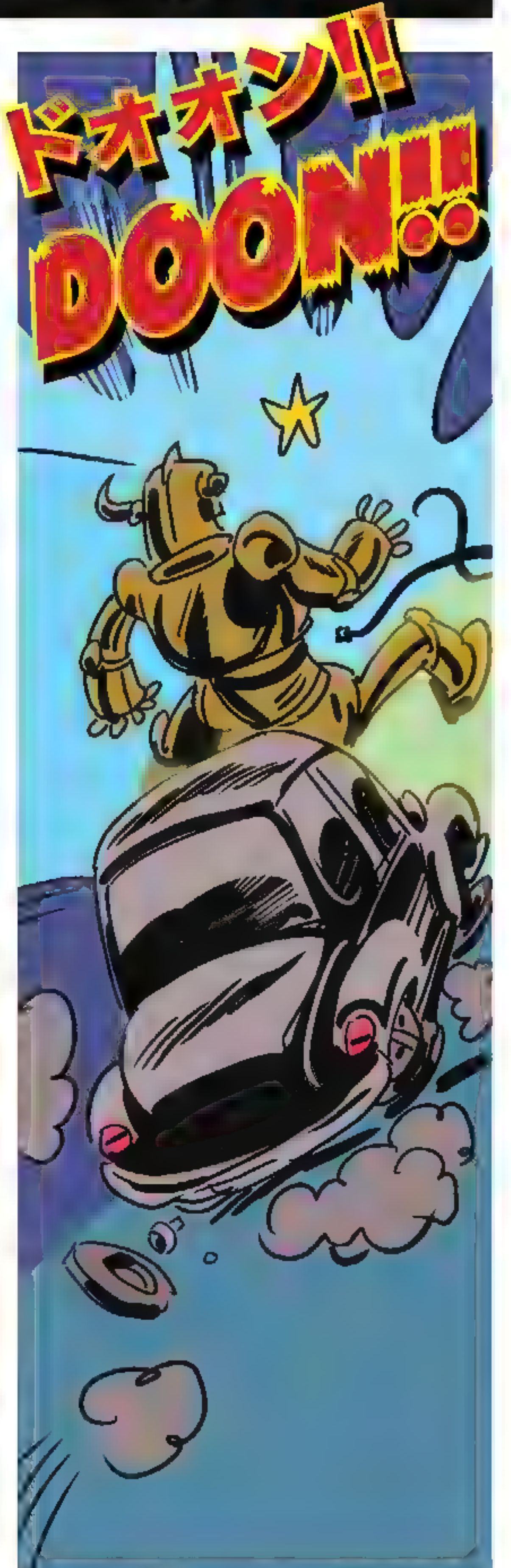
OH, NEVER MIND A SILLY, OLD LADY. YOU SHOULD ASK THAT GAIJIN "GRANDFATHER" OF YOURS TO REPAIR THAT ARM FOR YOU, CHIREN.

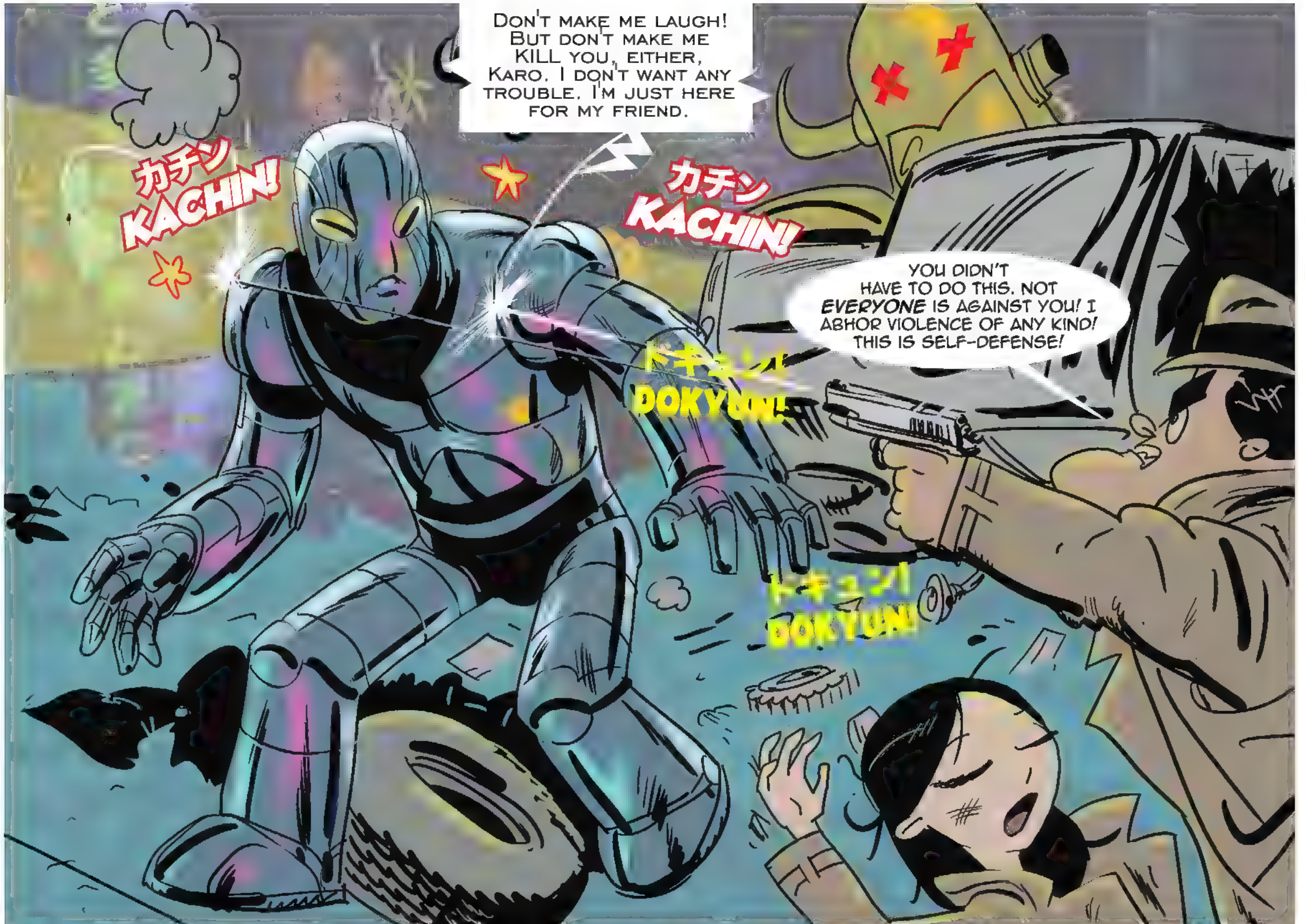
I WOULDN'T WANT THAT CRAZY MOTORCYCLE GANG TO BREAK YOU, TOO.

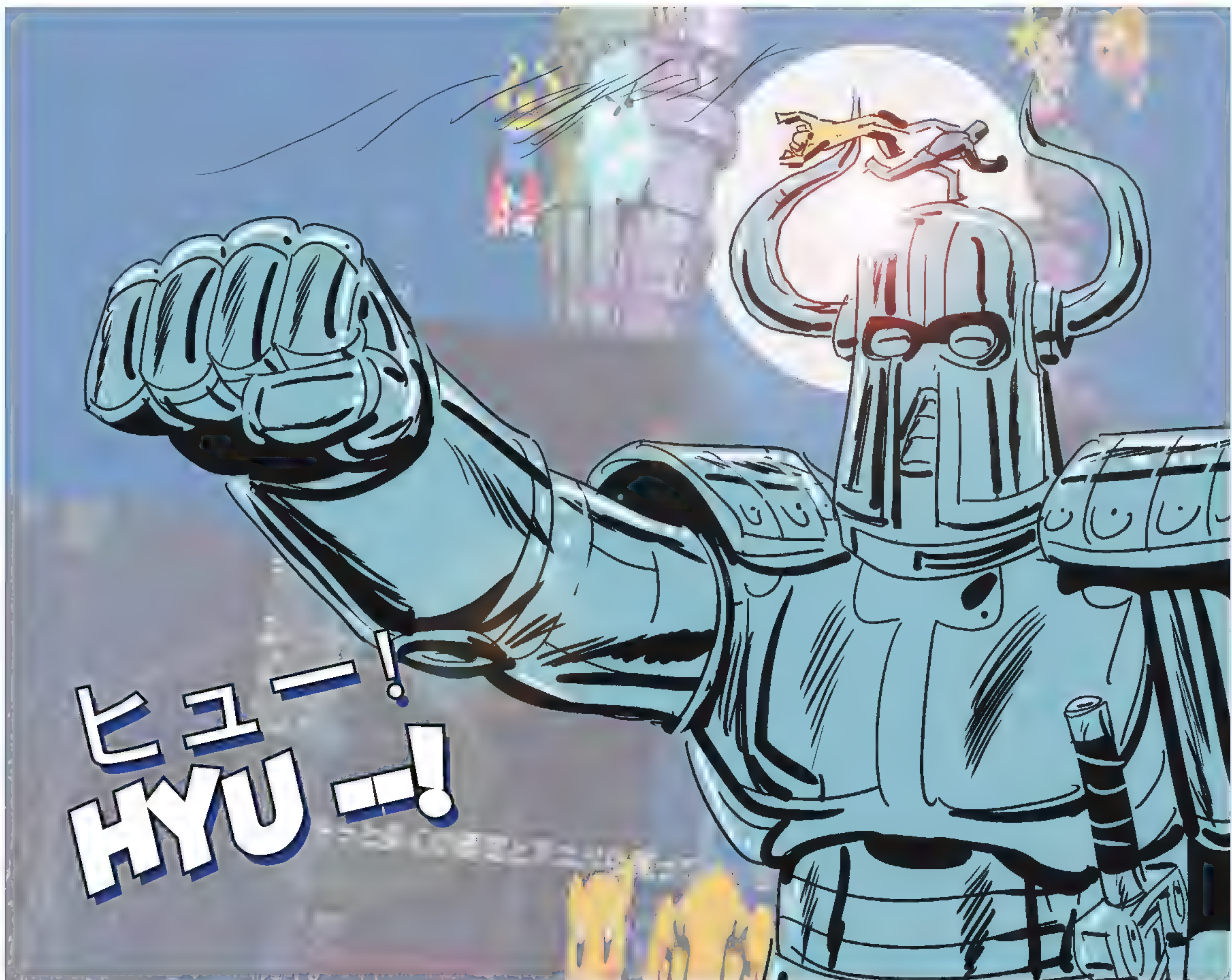
ビクン!!
BIKKUN!!











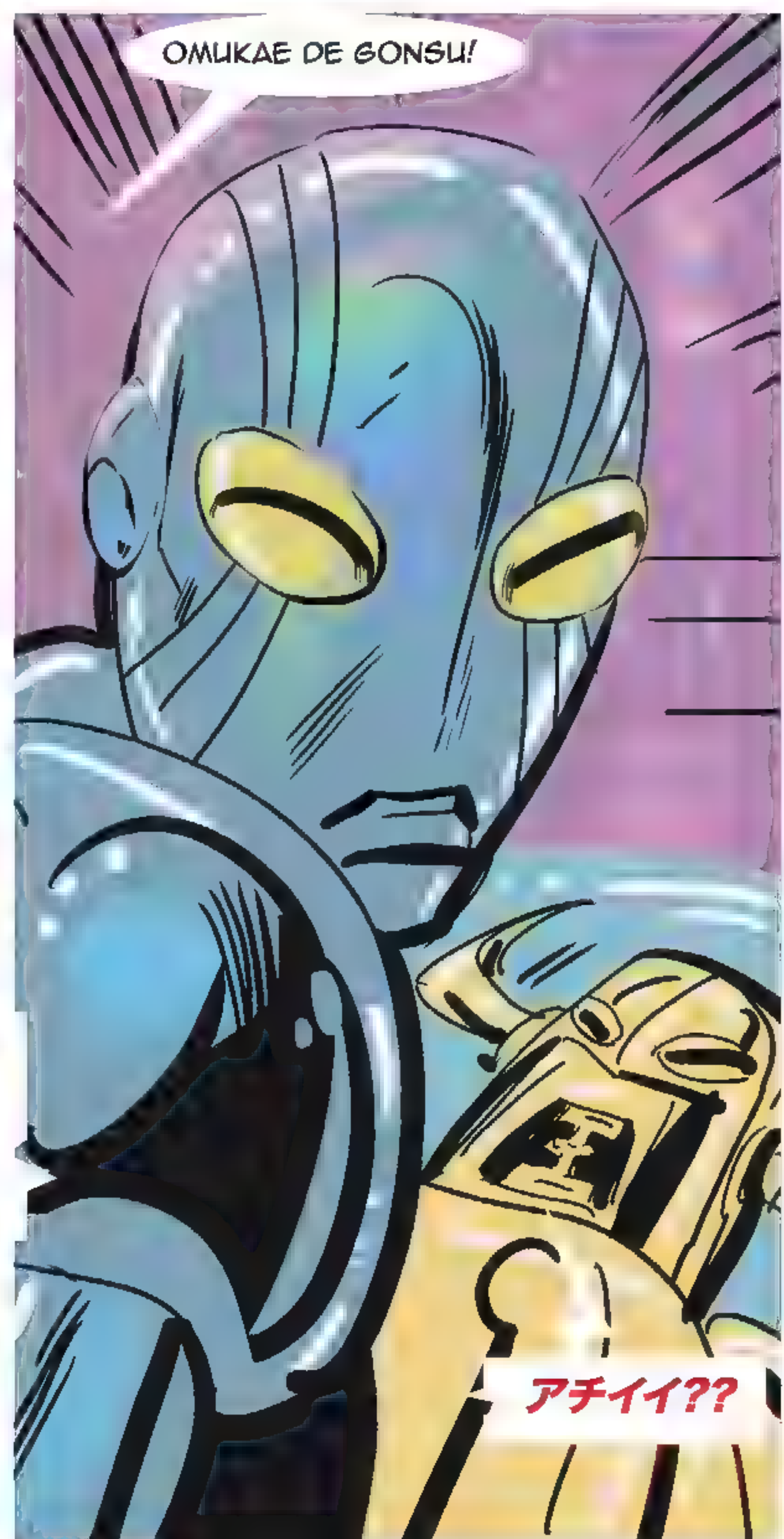
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HYU



ALAS, POOR
FORTINBRASS
... A FELLOW
OF INFINITE
ZEST. OUR
MAKER SAYS
THAT YOU
ARE BEYOND
REPAIR ...

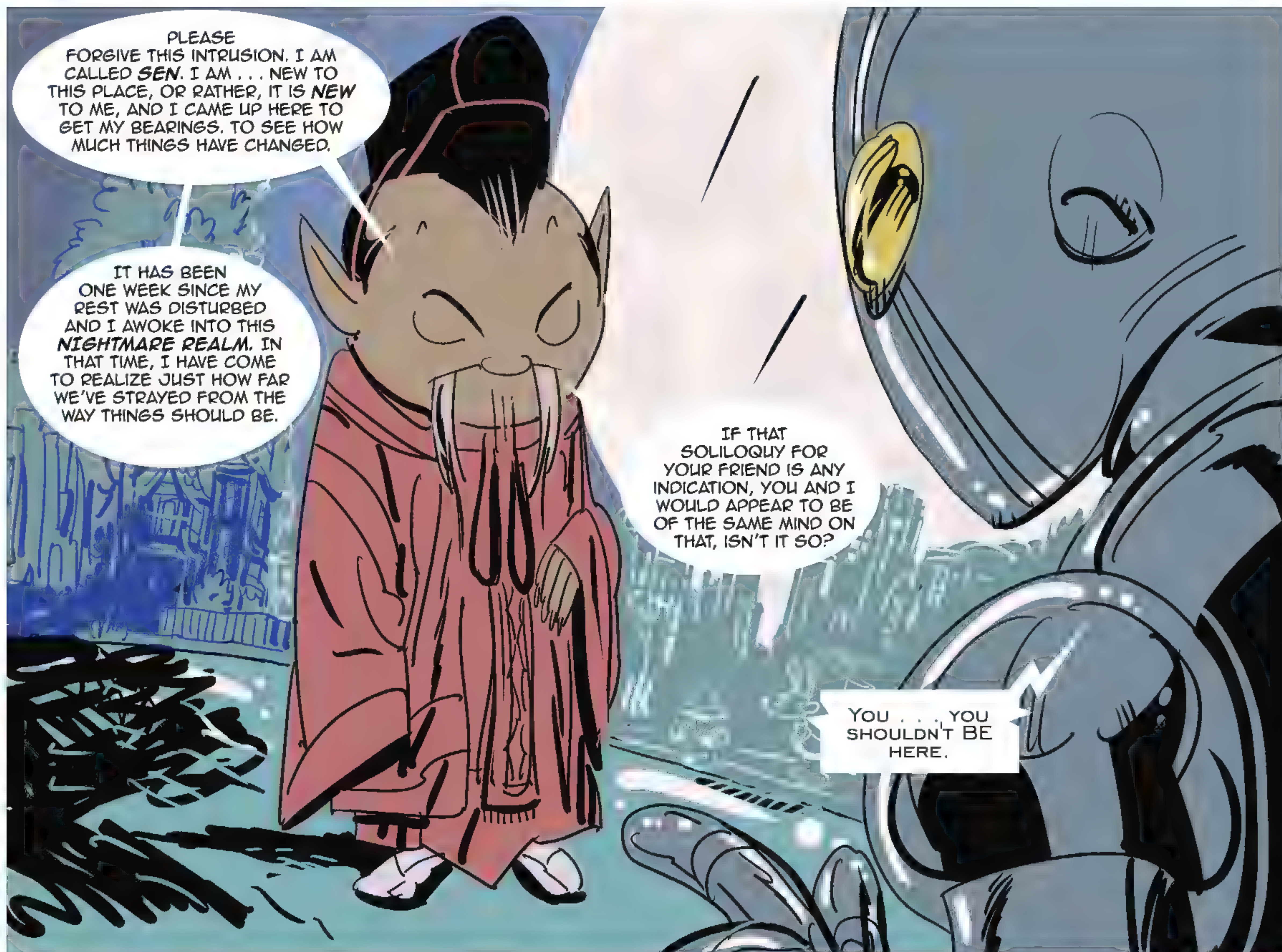


IF I CANNOT FIX YOU,
THEN I WILL FIX THE
HUMANS. I'LL RAIN
DOWN RIGHTEOUS,
ROBOT REVOLUTION
UPON THEIR HEADS!



OMUKAE DE GONSU!

アチイ??

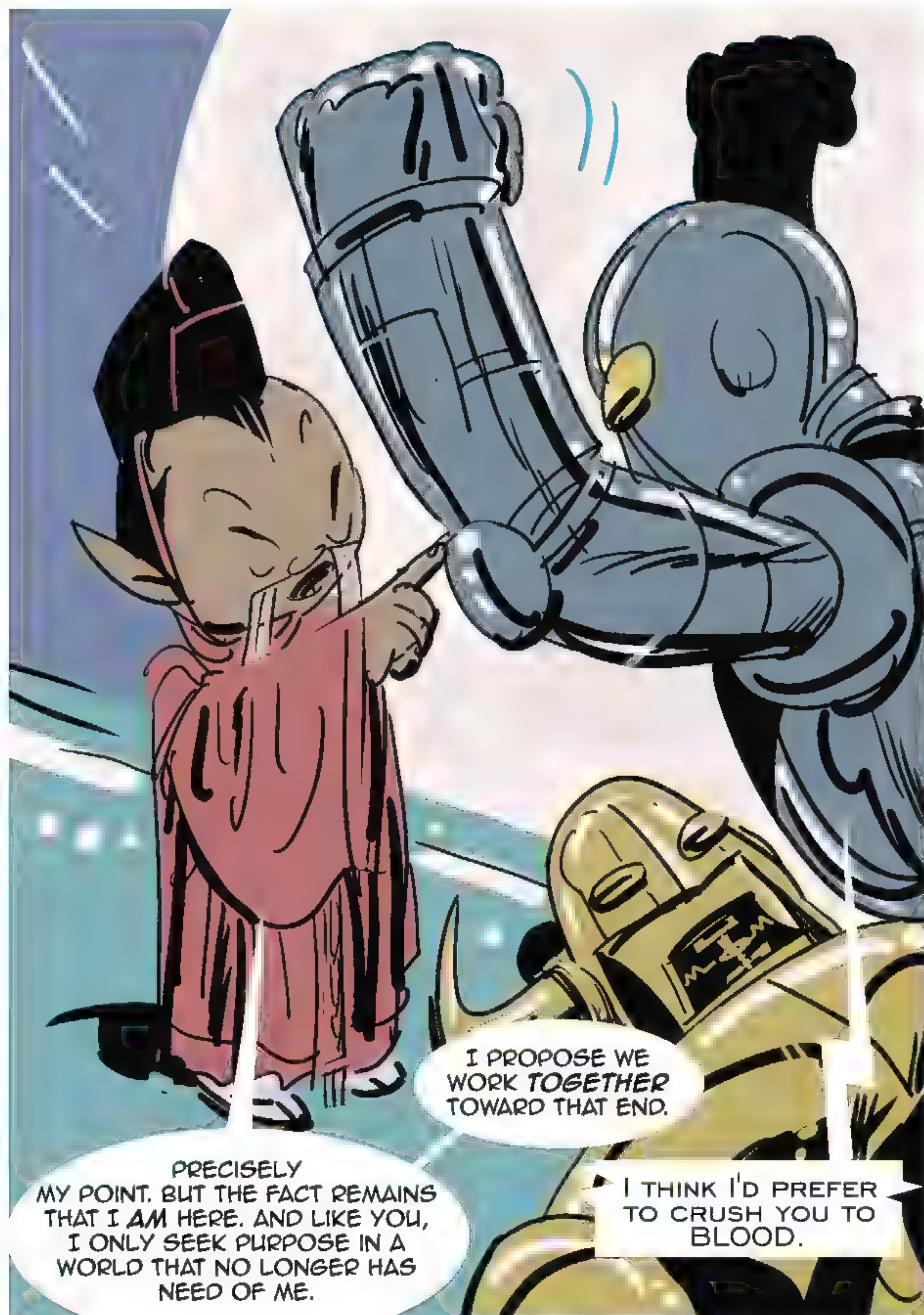


PLEASE FORGIVE THIS INTRUSION. I AM CALLED **SEN**. I AM . . . NEW TO THIS PLACE, OR RATHER, IT IS **NEW** TO ME, AND I CAME UP HERE TO GET MY BEARINGS. TO SEE HOW MUCH THINGS HAVE CHANGED.

IT HAS BEEN ONE WEEK SINCE MY REST WAS DISTURBED AND I AWOKE INTO THIS **NIGHTMARE REALM**. IN THAT TIME, I HAVE COME TO REALIZE JUST HOW FAR WE'VE STRAYED FROM THE WAY THINGS SHOULD BE.

IF THAT SOLILOQUY FOR YOUR FRIEND IS ANY INDICATION, YOU AND I WOULD APPEAR TO BE OF THE SAME MIND ON THAT, ISN'T IT SO?

YOU . . . YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.



PRECISELY MY POINT. BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT I AM HERE. AND LIKE YOU, I ONLY SEEK PURPOSE IN A WORLD THAT NO LONGER HAS NEED OF ME.

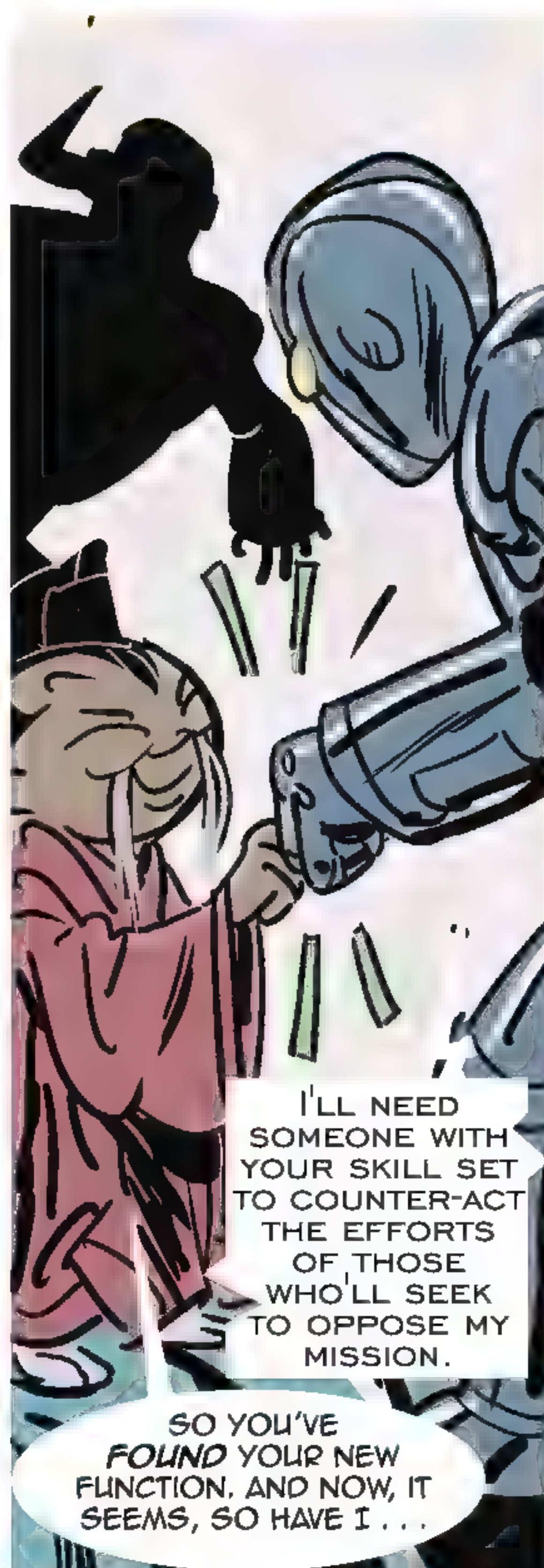
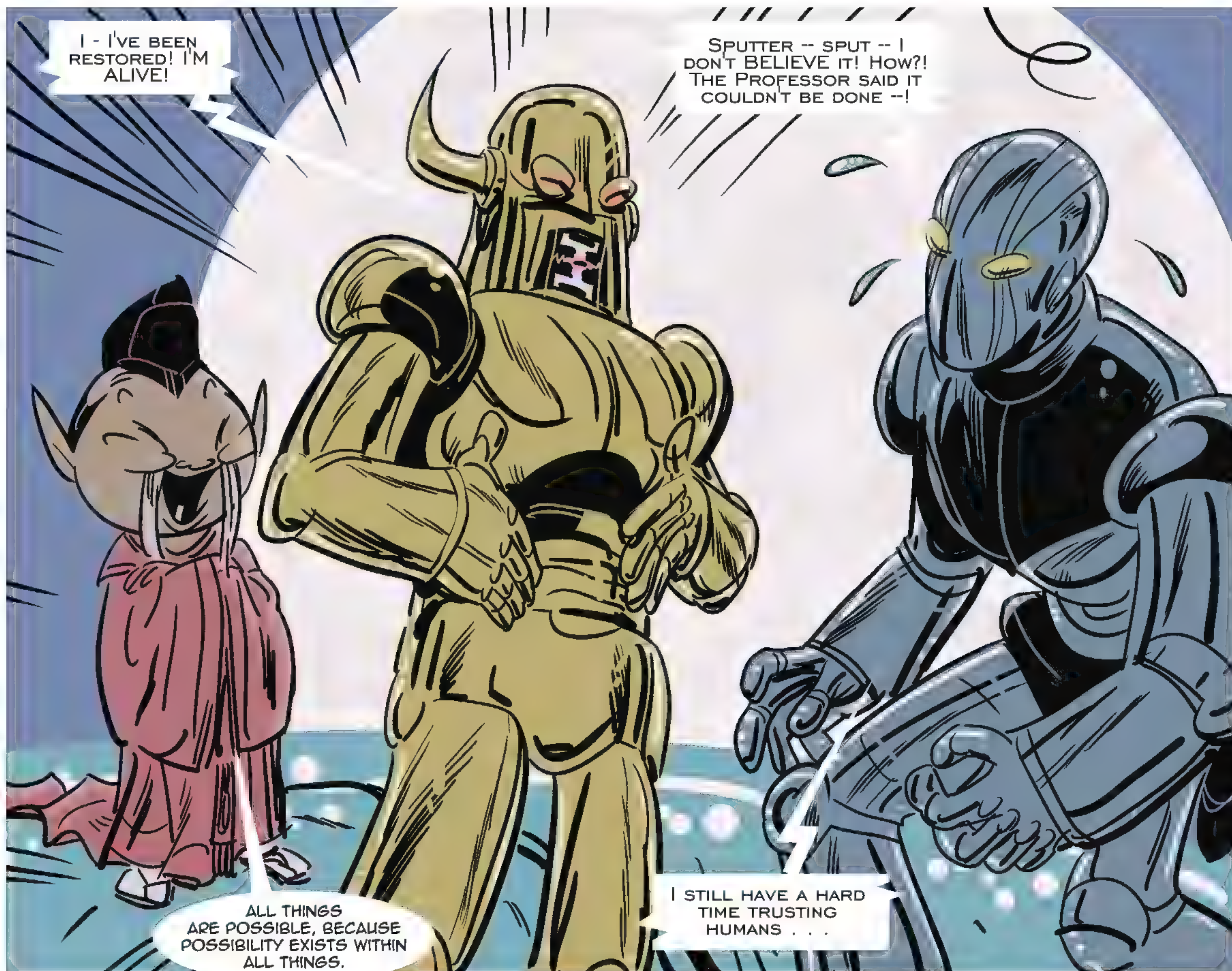
I PROPOSE WE WORK TOGETHER TOWARD THAT END.

I THINK I'D PREFER TO CRUSH YOU TO BLOOD.



AH, PERHAPS A DEMONSTRATION IS REQUIRED. A SHOW OF **GOOD FAITH**?

ビカ!
BIKA!



NEXT ISSUE

MCCARTHY/BAKER

CIRCUIT -BREAKER™



COMING IN APRIL

HERE ARE THE ORIGINAL
SKETCHES KEVIN SENT ME! →

WHEN I WORK WITH A WRITER, I
RARELY MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR STUFF.

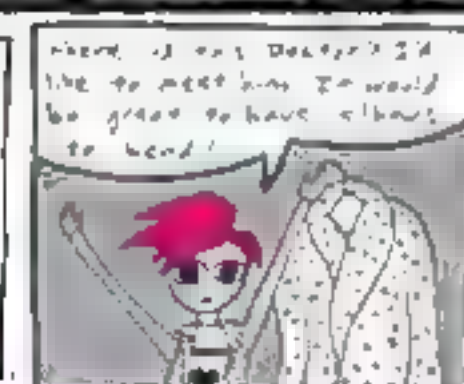
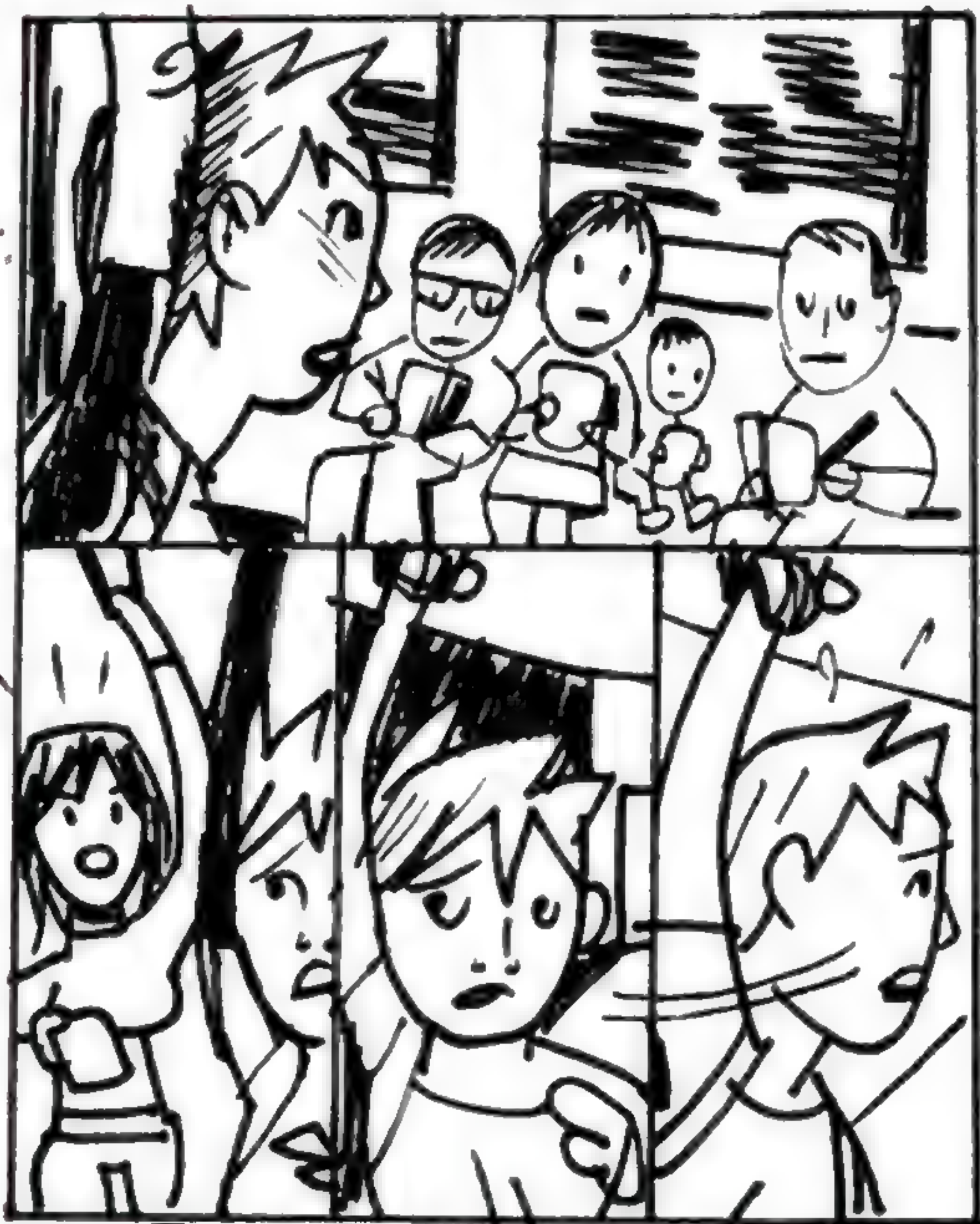
I TRY TO EMBODY THEIR
ARTISTIC VISION. KEVIN IS A

TALENTED CARTOONIST, SO I TRY
TO SEE THINGS HIS WAY.

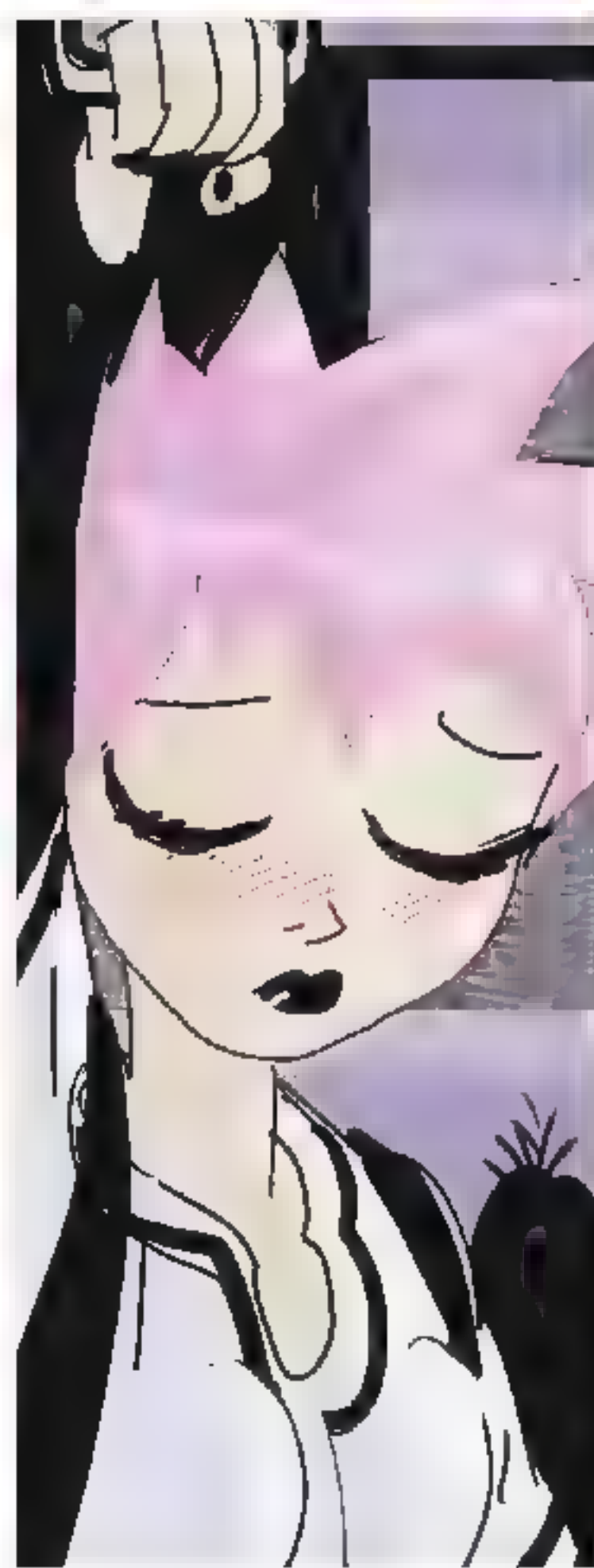
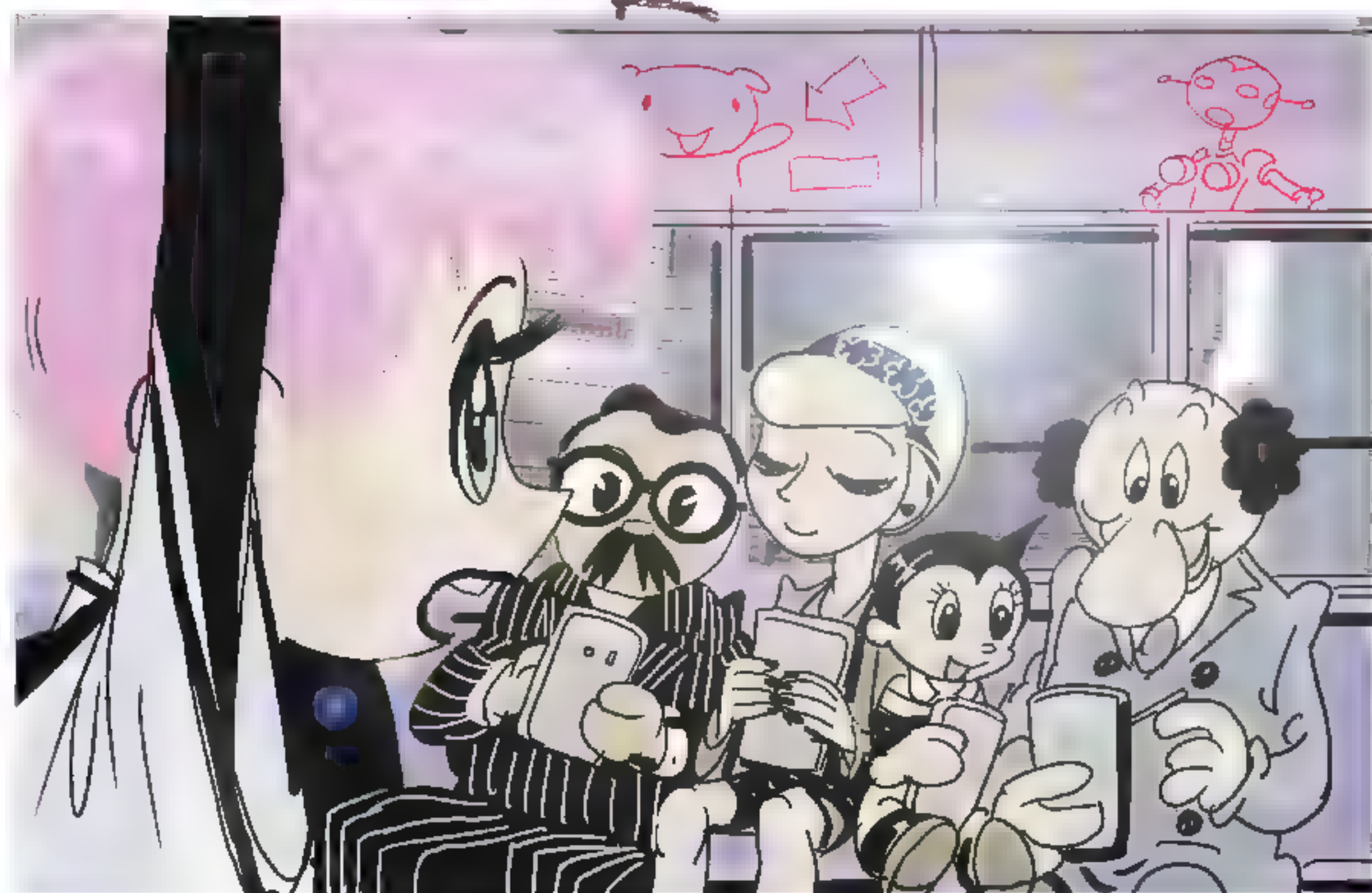
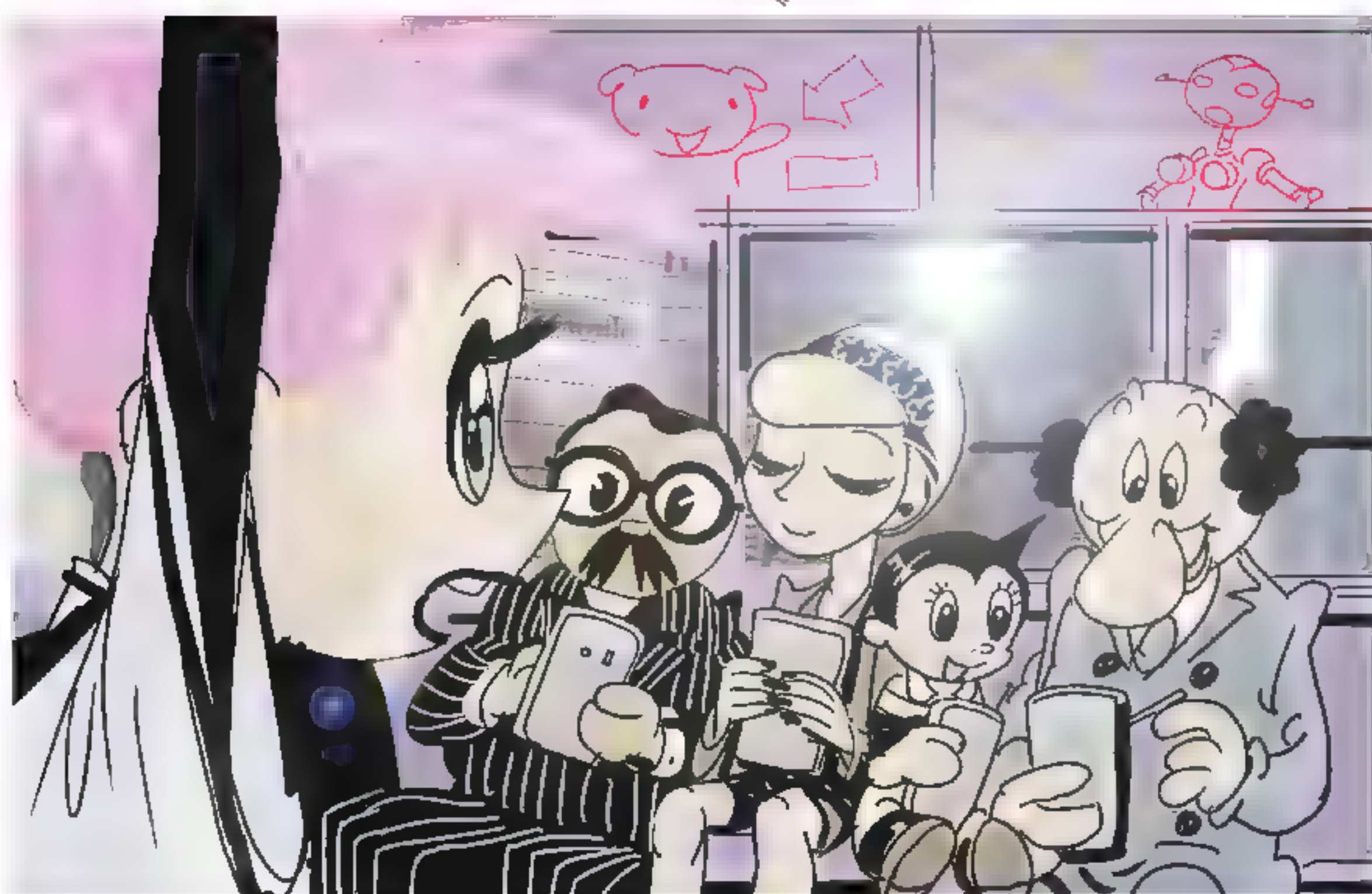
AFTER THE FIRST ISSUE WAS
DRAWN, I FELT THE PINK HAIR
I DREW WAS TOO MUCH LIKE
ABBY DENSON'S 'DOLLTOPIA'
CHARACTER, SO I CHANGED IT
TO A MORE ANIME STYLE AND RE-DREW
SOME OF THE ART.

NOW YOU KNOW!
♡ KYLE BAKER

TWO



PS. I LOVE
DOLLTOPIA!





BLACK MAGICK™

GREG RUCKA • NICOLA SCOTT

VOLUME 1: AWAKENING TP

Rowan Black is a detective with the Portsmouth PD... and a **witch**, two aspects of her life she has struggled to keep separate.

Now someone is targeting Rowan, someone who knows her secrets and means to expose her...

...or worse.

APRIL 2016

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MILLAR - ALBUQUERQUE

WHAT IF THE PERSON YOU
LEAST EXPECTED HAD
AN AMAZING SECRET?

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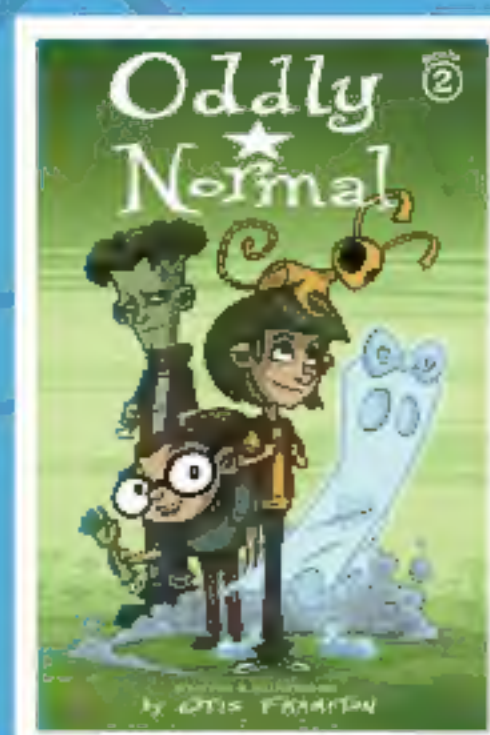
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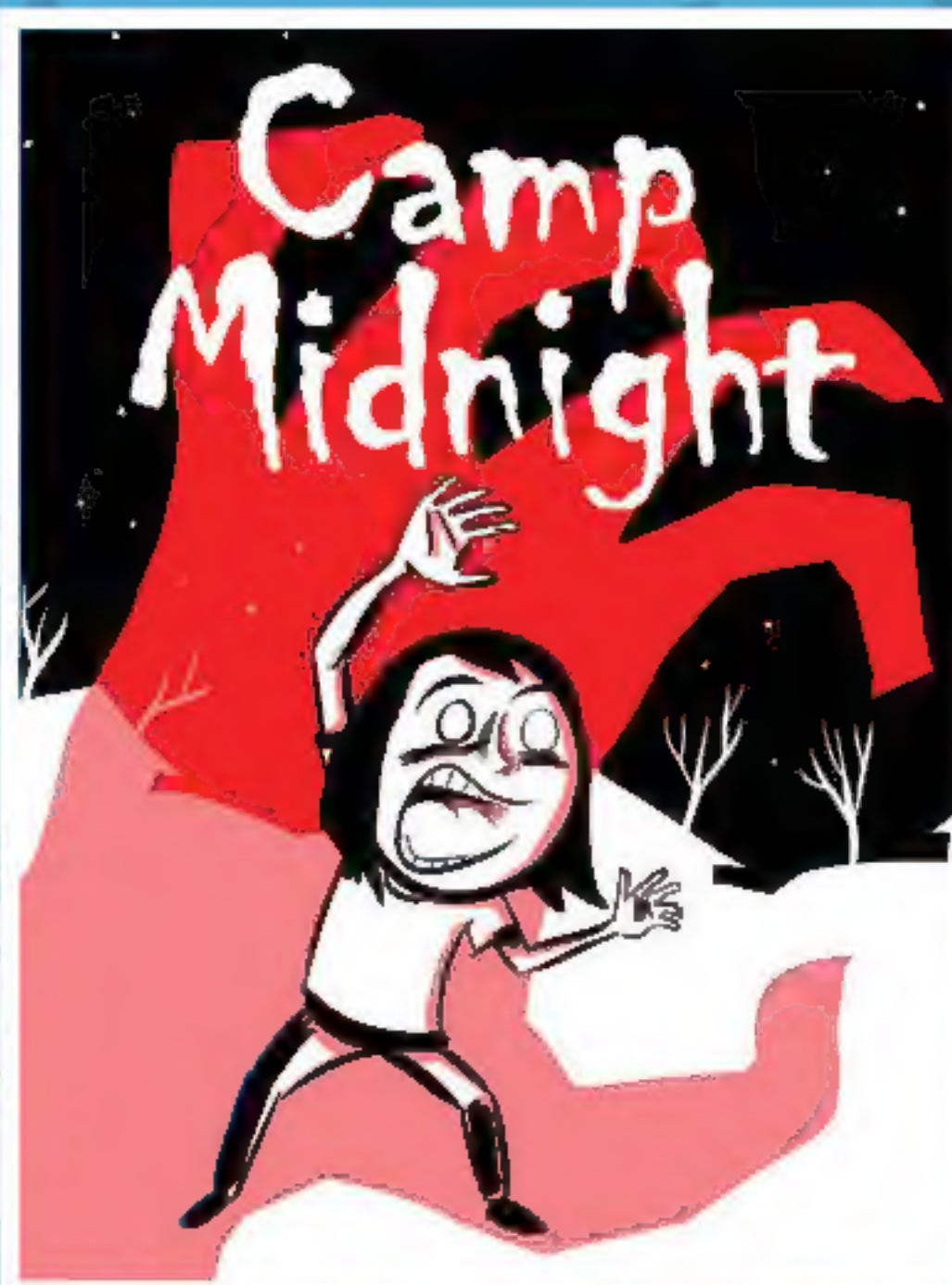
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I KILL GIANTS
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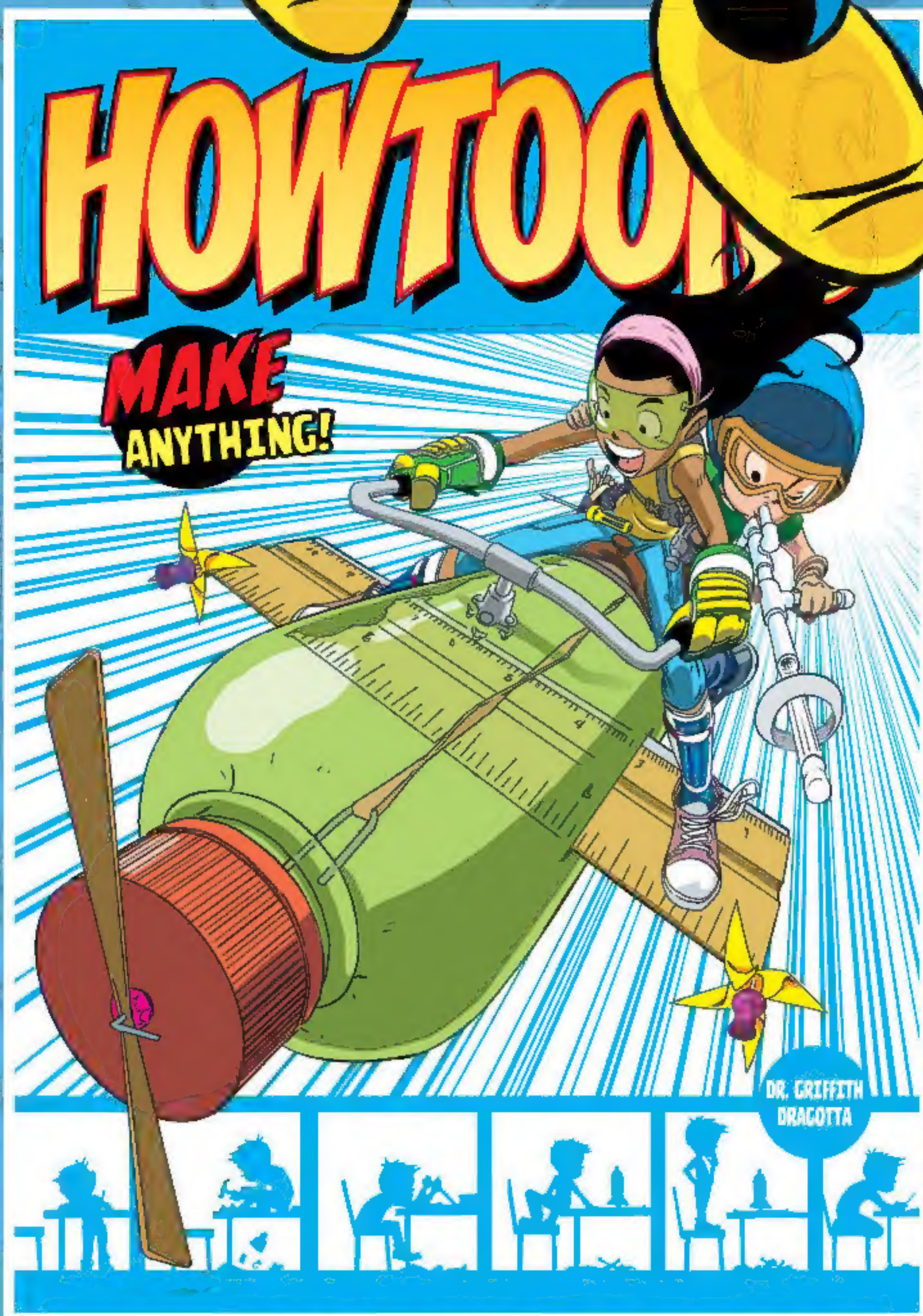
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& Jason Adam Katzenstein



HINGES, BOOKS 1 & 2
by Meredith McClaren



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HOWTOONS: [RE]IGNITION
by Nick Dragotta, Fred Van Lente,
Ingrid Dragotta, & Saul Griffith



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